NOTES ON THE HEBREW PROPHETS

G. WYNNE EDWARDS
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OXFORD AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

E. C. Sherwood

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PREFACE

This text-book is the outcome of our experience as teachers of Scripture in the middle forms of St. Leonards School, St. Andrews. It owes its present form to the fact that it was originally written to avoid the necessity of note-taking on the part of our pupils, our object being to ensure clearness and brevity, and at the same time to put into their hands a book which would not be intelligible without the actual text of the Bible. We have found that by the use of these notes not only was time saved and more accuracy secured, but our pupils were enabled to concentrate upon the Bible itself.

The method of Scripture study for which the notes are intended aims at giving the schoolboy or schoolgirl some understanding of the Bible as a whole and of the relation of the Old to the New Testament, as a preliminary to the more detailed and scholarly study of the individual books.

As to the subject-matter, we make no claim whatever to originality; we have gathered material from many sources, and the publication of the book has been made possible only by the courtesy of those Biblical scholars from whose works we have not hesitated to borrow, and of their publishers, and to these we wish to express our gratitude.

We have made free use of the following books:—

G. A. Smith, *Book of the Twelve*, vols. i and ii, *Isaiah*, vols. i and ii, Expositor's Bible (Hodder and Stoughton); *Jerusalem*, vol. ii (Hodder and Stoughton).

Driver, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah; Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (T. & T. Clark); *Minor Prophets*, vol. ii, Century Bible Series (T. C. & E. C. Jack); *Joel and Amos*, *Daniel*, Cambridge Bible Series (Cambridge University Press).

The late A. B. DAVIDSON, *Ezekiel*, Cambridge Bible Series (Cambridge University Press); *article*, 'Jeremiah' in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible* (T. & T. Clark).

WHITEHOUSE, *Isaiah*, vols. i and ii, Century Bible Series (T. C. & E. C. Jack).

KIRKPATRICK, *The Doctrine of the Prophets* (Macmillan & Co., Ltd.).

BEVAN, *Jerusalem under the High Priests* (Edward Arnold).

SAYCE, *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments* (Religious Tract Society).

We also wish to acknowledge the kind help given us by Dr. Whitehouse, of Cheshunt College, Cambridge, in the correction of our notes, and above all we owe a very special debt of gratitude to Dr. G. A. Smith, Principal of the University of Aberdeen, whose books have given us both guidance and inspiration, for his great kindness in reading and amending the rough drafts of our notes, and for many illuminating suggestions.

We must not forget the helpful criticism given us by many of our colleagues and friends, among whom we should like to mention Miss H. M. Woolley, late Senior English Mistress at St. Leonards School, without whose initiative and originality the work might never have been undertaken.

For the map we are indebted to Miss M. T. Noltenius, Senior Art Mistress at St. Leonards School.

The Notes pre-suppose the use of the Revised Version.

GRACE WYNNE-EDWARDS.
KATHARINE H. McCUTCHEON

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TABLE OF CONTEMPORARY KINGS

Date.	*Kings of Judah.*	*Kings of Israel.*	*Contemporary Kings.*
10th century.	Rehoboam.	Jeroboam I.	
	Abijam.		
	Asa.		
		Nadab.	
		Baasha.	Ben-hadad I.
9th century.		Elah.	
		Zimri (7 days).	
		House of Omri. Omri.	
		Ahab.	Ben-hadad II.
	Jehoshaphat.		
		Ahaziah.	
		Jehoram.	Mesha of Moab.
	Jehoram.		
	Ahaziah.		
	Athaliah.	House of Jehu. Jehu.	Hazael.
	Joash.		
		Jehoahaz.	
8th century.		Joash.	Ben-hadad III
	Amaziah.		
		Jeroboam II.	Shalmaneser III.
	Uzziah.		
		Zechariah (6 months).	
		Shallum (1 month).	
		Menahem.	Tiglath Pileser III (Pul).
	Jotham.		
		Pekahiah.	
	Ahaz.	Pekah.	Rezin of Syria.
		Hoshea.	Shabaka (So) of Egypt.
			Shalmaneser IV.
		(Fall of Samaria.)	Sargon.
B.C. 721.		Captivity of Israel.	
	Hezekiah.		Merodach Baladan.
			Sennacherib.
			Taharka of Egypt.

Date.	*Kings of Judah.*	*Kings of Israel.*	*Contemporary Kings.*
7th century.	Manasseh.		Asarhaddon.
			Assur-banipal.
	Amon.		
	Josiah.		[Scythian hordes.]
			Nabopolassar.
			Pharaoh Necho II.
B.C. 608.	Jehoahaz (3 months).		
	Jehoiakim.		
			Fall of Nineveh (607–6).
			Defeat of Pharaoh Necho by Nebuchadrezzar at Carchemish. B.C. 605.
			Nebuchadrezzar. B.C. 604.
B.C. 597.	Jehoiachin (3 months). (First Captivity.)		
	Zedekiah.		Pharaoh Hophra.
B.C. 586.	Fall of Jerusalem. (Second Captivity.)		

INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew Bible was divided into three parts, (*a*) the Law, i.e. the Pentateuch, (*b*) the Prophets, and (*c*) the Writings. The second section was further subdivided into the 'Former Prophets' and the 'Latter'. The 'Former' included the historical books, Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings, which owed their classification to the fact that the history which they contain was written from the prophetic standpoint, with the deliberate intention of revealing God to the Hebrews through His providential dealings with the race. The 'Latter Prophets' comprised Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 'Book of the Twelve', a more correct title for the so-called 'Minor Prophets'. The Writings included the poetical, the remaining historical books, and Daniel.

The actual study of Hebrew prophecy alone indicates the full extent of the meaning to be attached to the word 'prophet'. The origin of the Hebrew word is uncertain. It may possibly be connected with a root meaning 'to declare' or 'to utter', implying that the prophets spoke as the acknowledged messengers of God. As their history developed, the *nābî* (cf. Assyrian *nabû*) began to play many parts, as lawgiver, statesman, historian, and preacher of righteousness. When the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, the word *prŏphētēs* was used, from which the English word 'prophet' is derived, and it is a fairly accurate rendering of the Hebrew term. The *prŏphētēs* was the public interpreter of the Deity, the medium through which the oracles were given to man, obviously a fitting title for those who, like the prophets of the Old Testament, were men *who spoke publicly on behalf of God*.

The prophets of Israel had their origin probably in the Semitic 'soothsayer', who consulted his deity on behalf of his tribe by primitive methods, e. g. visions, signs, and omens. They employed in general the same external means (cf. Moses), but upon them God's Spirit had come in a peculiar

way, so that they realized His Nature and His Righteousness. They recognized too in the Hebrews a people chosen by God's grace to fulfil a great destiny. Therefore they rebuked the national sin, and promoted national unity. Among these early prophets may be reckoned Moses, Joshua, and Samuel.

Samuel was the founder of a new order, the guilds or 'schools' of the prophets (1 Sam. 10^5), whose members combined religious enthusiasm with patriotism. They are found again and again as advisers of kings (2 Sam. 12^1 1 Kings 11^{29}, &c.) In two directions, however, they were peculiarly liable to temptation. There was danger lest religious enthusiasm should degenerate into undue excitement or fanaticism, and their connexion with politics and influence at courts betrayed them at times into subservience and insincerity (cf. 1 Kings 22^{11}). The test of the truly great prophet was his own individual character, and their greatest spirits rose to continuous intercourse with God. It was such intercourse that enabled Elijah and Elisha to guide the fortunes of the nation or meet the needs of the individual.

Forty years after the death of Elisha, there begins with Amos a new era, that of written prophecy. Thereby permanence was added to the work of the prophets, and the Hebrews became possessed of a literature unique in character and magnificent in style and subject. But whether his words were written or spoken, the work of the prophet was the same. He was the custodian of history, and interpreted it for the guidance of nation and king. He was the repository of the oracles of God, and expounded to man His righteousness, omnipotence, and love. He was the inspired statesman, who, gifted with insight into the future, saw the true destiny of the nation, and urged her along the line of its fulfilment. To the Hebrew prophet we owe the record of those experiences by which Israel from a state of semi-barbarism gradually emerged into the light of the knowledge of God, just as to her poets (who were often identical with her prophets) we owe the expression of every feeling of the human heart in its search to find Him.

A. THE PRE-EXILIC PROPHETS

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew Monarchy

(For Table of Kings, see page 7)

The Disruption of the Monarchy.

At the close of the reign of Solomon, after less than a century of monarchical government, the kingdom of Israel, bounded on the west by the Mediterranean, on the east and south by the Desert, and on the north extending to the mountains of Lebanon, was divided into two independent states. In addition to the discontent provoked by the heavy taxation and exaction of forced labour necessary for the building of the Temple and the royal palace, as well as for the maintenance of a luxurious and extravagant court, a stronger motive for secession is to be found in the jealousy of the powerful tribe of Ephraim. In the time of the Judges it had been the dominant tribe, possessing the ancient sanctuaries of Shiloh and Kirjath-jearim, and had claimed the supremacy among the Twelve. (Compare the traditional prophecy made by Jacob, Gen. 49^{22-26}.) But under the monarchy it had seen both capital and sanctuary transferred to Jerusalem, and in the hands of the rival tribe of Judah. The discontented faction found a leader in Jeroboam, an Ephraimite ; a revolution took place, and the Northern Kingdom was founded, known as 'Israel' or 'Ephraim', while Judah, remaining faithful to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, constituted a separate Southern Kingdom.

The Divided Monarchy.

The 'Divided Monarchy' lasted for a period of about 220 years. In Israel there were nineteen kings, and in Judah eleven of David's line, and one usurper.

Judah as a Surviving Monarchy.

After Israel was overthrown by Assyria, Judah survived for a further period of under 140 years, during which time eight kings sat on the throne, from Hezekiah to Zedekiah. Thus the Hebrew monarchy lasted in all for about four centuries

and a half. The overthrow of each of the two kingdoms was due to false confidence placed in Egypt, the great rival whether of Assyria or Babylon, and to failure to recognize that in the conflict between these world-empires, Palestine was merely the battle-ground, and the only hope of survival for the smaller states lay in inaction.

I. Israel as a divided Monarchy, *c.* 940–721 B.C.

Jeroboam I was the first of a series of usurpers who ruled in Israel until overthrown by Omri, the founder of the house to which Ahab belonged. Under this line of kings Samaria became the capital of Israel, and the kingdom was firmly established, and Baal-worship flourished, until both the royal family and the established religion were overthrown by Jehu (2 Kings 9, 10^{1-28}). The fierce struggle with Syria carried on by him and his son Jehoahaz reduced Israel to impotence (2 Kings $10^{32,33}$ $13^{3,7}$), but its greatness was restored by Joash, in whose reign the lost territory was recovered (2 Kings $13^{24,25}$), whilst the battle of Beth-shemesh left Israel for the time being master of Judah and conqueror of Jerusalem (2 Kings 14^{8-14}).

Jeroboam II carried the conquests of his father still further. He recovered the land from 'the entering in of Hamath to the sea of the Arabah': in fact, under him the kingdom was greater than it had been since the Disruption. But his success was short-lived, and after a reign of six months, his son Zechariah fell a victim to conspiracy (2 Kings 15^{10}).

The history of the Northern Kingdom closes as it had begun with the rule of usurpers, the first of any importance being Menahem. In his reign Tiglath-pileser III (Pul) of Assyria exacted tribute from Israel (2 Kings $15^{19,20}$), and it was to throw off the Assyrian yoke that the conspiracy was formed which brought about the downfall of Israel. Pekah, who had seized the throne from Menahem's incapable son (2 Kings 15^{25}), made an alliance with Syria (2 Kings 16^{5}) with the object of resisting Assyria. When Ahaz of Judah refused to join the

alliance they determined to dethrone him. Rezin seems to have restored Elath, a port on the Red Sea, to the Edomites as a reward for their help (2 Kings 16^{6}), and to have threatened Jerusalem from the south, whilst Pekah with a victorious army attacked it from the north (2 Chron. $28^{5,6}$). When faced by Syria and Israel, Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help on abject terms (2 Kings 16^{7-9}). In consequence, Tiglath-pileser marched through the land as far as Philistia: then, turning north, he occupied Samaria. Pekah was murdered by Hoshea (2 Kings 15^{30}), who was set up as tributary king by Tiglath-pileser, and the inhabitants of the east and north of Israel were taken into captivity. The Assyrians then attacked Damascus, which fell after a two years' siege (2 Kings 16^{9}), and Syria became a province of Assyria. For nine years Hoshea maintained his position as vassal (2 Kings 17^{1}), but on the death of Tiglath-pileser he planned revolt, backed by promises of help from Shabaka (So) of Egypt. Shalmaneser IV came up against him, and, though he himself was unable to capture Samaria, it was taken by his successor, the great warrior Sargon (2 Kings 18^{9-11}). Thus had the policy of Ahaz led to the overthrow of the states lying between Judah and Assyria.

II. Judah as a divided Monarchy

During the reigns of the early kings of Judah war between the two states seems to have been almost continuous, but in the reign of Jehoshaphat, the contemporary of Ahab, the kingdom appears to have been firmly established. His reign was followed by a period of strife. Under his son and grandson, Judah found herself the prey of rival factions, and the house of David was almost entirely destroyed (2 Chron. $21^{4,16-17}$ $22^{8,10}$). Athaliah, the queen-mother, daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, seized the throne, and though her overthrow was followed by a period of reaction, the nobles soon mastered the weak Joash, and his reign ended in disaster. His son Amaziah, though a great warrior, was defeated by Joash of

Israel, and at his death left Judah subject to the northern kingdom (2 Kings 14^{8-14}).

Uzziah, son and successor of Amaziah, reorganized the army, reduced the surrounding tribes of Philistines, Arabs, and Ammonites to submission, and recovered Elath, restoring the maritime greatness of the kingdom. He encouraged corn-growing, vine-dressing, the keeping of flocks and herds, and built cisterns and towers all over the country. Under him Judah reached the zenith of its power, but, according to the Chronicler (although the historic value of the record is doubted by many scholars), Uzziah was uplifted by his success, and took on himself the office of burning incense in the Temple, a duty which belonged by right to the priests alone. In consequence of his presumption he was smitten with leprosy, and lived for the rest of his life in a 'house of separation', his son Jotham ruling for him (2 Chron. 26). Jotham's reign (2 Chron. 27) was in every way a continuation of his father's, and when he died the period of Judah's greatness was over.

With the wicked and degenerate Ahaz begins the downfall of the independence of Judah. He encouraged idolatry of every kind, hoping that by devotion to foreign divinities he might obtain assistance against his enemies (2 Chron. 28^{23}, and cf. *vv.* $^{2-4}$). He even interfered with the Temple itself, setting up there an altar after the pattern of one which he had seen in Damascus (2 Kings 16^{10-16}), and he made certain other changes affecting the religious ceremonial, influenced partly by the desire to rob the Temple of its wealth for political purposes (2 Kings 16^{17-18}).

For his war with Rezin and Pekah see p. 13. On the fall of Samaria, Judah was left with no barrier between her and Assyria, and never recovered her independence for any considerable time. From this time forth she was subject in turn to Assyria, Egypt, and Babylon, until she was finally carried into captivity. With the death of Ahaz begins the history of Judah as a surviving monarchy.

The Eighth Century in Israel and Judah

The first group of prophets who wrote—Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah—lived in the eighth century, during the reigns of Joash and Jeroboam II in Israel, and Uzziah in Judah. State of the two Nations.

1. Extent of the double kingdom. The boundaries reached from Hamath to the Red Sea, and were wider than they had been since the time of Solomon. (1) Political.

2. Success in War. Joash and Jeroboam II had defeated the Syrians, hitherto Israel's most formidable foe, Uzziah the Philistines, and Uzziah had reorganized and equipped the army. By the time of Amos a generation had grown up that had not seen war.

3. Extension of Trade. Israel and Judah had quarters in Damascus, ports on the Red Sea, allies in the Phoenician towns, tributaries in Egypt, and command of the main trade routes between Egypt and the North, the Desert and the Levant. They therefore became commercial powers.

1. City life developed at the expense of country life. Rich proprietors bought up huge estates (Isa. 5^{8} Mic. 2^{2}), thus ruining the small landowners, who also suffered from the rush to the towns. (2) Social and Moral.

2. Growth of luxury among the rich led to cruelty and indifference to the misery of the poor (Mic. 3^{2-3}).

3. A dishonest and extortionate middle class arose (Amos 8^{4-6}).

4. Justice decayed (Amos 5^{12} Isa. 1^{23} Mic. 7^{3}).

Religion was popular and fashionable. The nation believed in Jehovah as its national God, and, proud of its call to be the chosen people, was confident that God would give it victory over its enemies. The outward ordinances of religion were observed with scrupulous zeal. People thronged the sanctuaries and shrines, of which Bethel was chief, and brought offerings in abundance (Amos 4^{4}). (3) Religious.

1. They looked upon Jehovah as a local deity, who had helped them in the past and was bound to help them in the future. Misconceptions of God.

2. They thought that He could be propitiated by ceremonial and sacrifice, but they forgot or ignored the fact that He was zealous for justice and uprightness.

The fourteenth century in England, where similar conditions inspired Langland and Wiclif, presents an interesting comparison.

Effect of Assyria upon Prophecy.

(1) A wider outlook.

By far the greatest event of the eighth century was the appearance of Assyria in Palestine. Hitherto Israel's world had been bounded by the River of Egypt and the Euphrates, and they had only concerned themselves with the petty states of Palestine. Now they found themselves face to face with a great world-empire, which mocked at them and their God (cf. 2 Kings $18^{34,35}$). Their faith was shaken, and they were tempted to disbelieve in Jehovah's power to save them. It was the prophets' task to lead the nation to a grander conception of God as Absolute Righteousness and therefore Absolute Omnipotence, in whose hand lay all the forces of this new and greater world. See Isaiah's answer to the Rabshakeh (2 Kings 19^{25}).

(2) Wider sympathies.

As state after state went down before the Assyrian armies, the old hatreds and enmities conceived by Israel in the border wars were replaced, among the greater minds of the nation, by tenderness and pity towards their fellow victims.

(3) The idea of unity.

The Assyrian invasion diminished tribal differences, and with these the Semitic belief in a god for every tribe. Room was left in the Jewish mind for the belief in the *universal* sway of one God, and that the only righteous God, Jehovah.

AMOS

[Chief Source: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. i, G. A. Smith.]

Summary of Book.

1. Ch. 1, 2. Prologue. Oracles against the crimes of the heathen, culminating in a denunciation of Judah (?) and of Israel, whose doom will be no less awful.

2. Ch. 3–6. Israel's crimes and doom—six groups of threats.

3. Ch. $7–9^{10}$. Further threatenings of judgement in the form of five visions, interrupted by the narrative of the scene at Bethel.

4. Ch. $9^{11–15}$. Epilogue (*probably by a later hand*). The promise of the restoration of the house of Israel.

Date. The book was written during the reign of Jeroboam II, probably in the latter half of the reign, when Israel was at the height of its prosperity.

Amos' Life. Though Amos addressed his prophecies to Northern Israel, he was a native of Judah, 'a herdsman of Tekoa' (1^{1})—a desolate pastureland about twelve miles south of Jerusalem, sloping towards the Dead Sea. Here Amos tended his dwarf desert sheep, and cultivated a kind of poor fig (7^{14}). Note similes throughout the book taken from his desert experience.

Character. He was exposed to danger from wild beasts at night and wandering tribes by day, so that his life demanded vigilance (cf. 5^{19}), quick judgement, and physical and mental clearness of vision. Yet he lacked sympathy, and his austerity rarely allows his patriotism to manifest itself ($7^{2,5}$).

Knowledge of the World. 1. To sell his sheep and wool, he visited the great markets, Bethel, Samaria, Beersheba, &c., where were also the great national sanctuaries (cf. $7^{10–14}$). Here he saw the religious life of the people.

2. He lived near the great north road from Hebron, and saw the Phoenician slave-trade and the Philistine slave-catchers ($1^{6,9}$), and the approach of the plague from Egypt (4^{10} 6^{10}).

3. On his journeys he heard from Phoenician pedlars of Assyrian successes.

Call. 3^{8} 7^{15} 9^{1}. Contrast with Isaiah 6, and note the absence of formal consecration. He heard God's voice and obeyed.

Source of his Inspiration. His intense realization of the righteousness of God gave him a clear vision of Israel's sin, and, accustomed to watch events, he saw the coming danger from Assyria, and leaped to the conclusion that in this form would come Israel's punishment. This he illustrates from his desert life ($3^{3–8}$).

Events do not happen without a cause. God's voice heard by him in events must mean doom, and he must give his warning.

Scene at Bethel.

$7-8^4$. After preaching for some time at the markets throughout Israel, Amos appeared at the great festival at the royal sanctuary of Bethel. Inspired by a vision of God (9^1), he preached a sermon consisting of four visions—

1. Warning of locusts (7^{1-3}),
2. Warning of drought (7^{4-6}),
3. Plummet (7^{7-9}).

At this point he was interrupted (7^{10-17}) and accused of treason. He was barely permitted to describe his fourth vision of—

4. A basket of summer fruits (Kaits), which foretold the end (Kets) or doom of Israel,

before he was silenced and cast out.

Characteristic points in Amos' Teaching.

(1) Responsibility of Opportunity.

In 1^3-2^8 Amos denounces the foreign nations for the sins of barbarity. Then he turns on Israel (note that it is the same God who judges the heathen and Israel) and denounces its crimes, the sins of civilization, which are far more heinous than those of foreign nations. Behind the Israelites lay their history (2^{9-11}), yet they have misused their opportunities, corrupted the innocent, and silenced their prophets (2^{12}). Hence their doom is the greater (3^2), and is inevitable (cf. similes 3^{3-8}).

(2) Dangers of Unreal Civilization.

In the external splendour of Jeroboam's reign, Amos saw extravagant luxury ($3^{12b,15}$ 6^{4-6}). This was obtained by 'violence and robbery' (3^{10}), oppression (3^9) of the poor and needy, who were sold as slaves (2^6), by dishonest trading, false weights and worthless goods (8^{4-6}), bribery and miscarriage of justice (5^{11-12}). Women were as hard-hearted as men (4^{1-3}). All this meant destruction. The pampered bodies that loll on silken couches shall be left like the 'crumbs of a lion's meal' (3^{12}), and the women shall be led away like rebellious cattle (4^2).

(3) Uselessness of Unreal Religion.

In 4^{4-6} Amos describes the worship of Israel, and caricatures its zeal. Their religion is only sin ('transgress', 4^4) and

is based on a misconception of God. Men treat Him as a Being to be bribed by gifts, while He sends upon them famine, drought, blight, pestilence and earthquake (4^{6-11}), looking upon them as creatures with characters to discipline. Yet Israel will not return.

With this confidence in ceremonial Amos couples their false political security. They look for the 'Day of Jehovah', but to them it will be not victory but death (5^{18-20}). Punishment is inevitable. Only if the impossible could happen could it be averted (6^{11-12}). Assyria must come (6^{14}).

(4) Meaning of Religion.

Religion is the finding of God ($5^{6,14}$).

They may seek Him—

1. In their past history (2^{9-11}), and see His care for men.
2. In the great calamities of nature, and see God's chastisements (4^{6-11}).

When they have found Him their religion will bear the fruit of justice (5^{24}, and cf. 5^{21}).

Thus captivity will turn to discipline and not to doom (5^{6}).

HOSEA

[Chief Source: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. i, G. A. Smith.]

Date.

Hosea's book belongs to the reign of Jeroboam II and to the ten or fifteen years after Jeroboam's death, i.e. to the reigns of the usurpers Menahem and Shallum.

Hosea's Life.

He was a native of the Northern Kingdom and may have been a priest. He was moved by an intense love of country. Note his constant use of the tribe-name, 'Ephraim', the lack of allusion to Judah, his pictures of its scenery, and his intimate knowledge of the politics of Israel and its social disorders. (Cf. Hos. 5^{13} $6^{8,9a}$ 7^{5} 8^{4}, &c.)

Hosea had married a woman named Gomer, who was faithless to him and left him in search of pleasure. The suffering of Hosea in consequence of her desertion opened his eyes to God's sorrow at Israel's disloyalty, but it was God's love for Israel which taught Hosea to go out into

the wilderness and recover his lost wife and bring her to her home, there to win her back to love and righteousness. Whether the story be allegorical or not, it is impossible to miss its meaning.

Style.

His style agrees with his subject; it is abrupt and broken, and reflects the unrest of the time of the usurpers. His language is often obscure, for he is moved by two strong conflicting feelings, his love for his people, and his conviction of their sin and consequent doom. (Cf. 6^{4-6}.)

Hosea contrasted with Amos.

Amos has been called the 'Prophet of Law', Hosea the 'Prophet of Love'. The love of God was no new idea to Israel. They had seen it revealed in their history. But to Amos, God's love only made His justice more certain, His vengeance inevitable. Hosea has a keen sense of law, but he realizes that God's love is as powerful as God's law. Amos preached repentance as a turning *from* sin, Hosea as a turning *to* God. Amos believes that the nation may be purified by judgement, Hosea by penitence.

Picture of his Times.

'*There is no truth nor mercy nor knowledge of GOD in the land*' (Hos. 4^{1}).

(1) Moral Decay.

This is due to the sins of the leaders of the people.

1. The priests rejoice in the people's sins because they increase their income by means of the fines imposed (4^{8}) (cf. the sale of indulgences). They are guilty of highway robbery and murder (6^{9a}), and are a stumbling-block to the people (5^{1}). They have forgotten the law of God (4^{6b}), and so fail in their duty as teachers, leaving the people in ignorance (4^{6a}).

2. The princes are wicked and unscrupulous (7^{2-7}), and gather round a vicious usurper. They are a 'snare' to the nation (5^{1}) and are no better than thieves (5^{10}).

3. The people follow their leaders (4^{9a}). They have a nominal reverence for Jehovah (8^{2}) and offer a formal worship, but are ignorant of Him (8^{4b}). They are both stupid and fickle, and will not tolerate rebuke (4^{4}). Their expression of penitence (6^{1-3}), though beautiful in form, is quoted by

Hosea as an illustration of the shallowness of their repentance (6[4]).

'*Ephraim he mixeth himself among the peoples*' (7[8a]). (2) Political Decay.
'*Ephraim is a cake not turned*' (7[8b]).

Israel's prosperity under Jeroboam II had brought the nation into close contact with the larger world. The time had come for them to abandon their seclusion, but they faced the larger world without a sure belief in Jehovah or a definite national purpose. The result was dissipation and confusion. National standards were lowered. Their national strength departed unnoticed (7[9]), and not even loss of prestige could arouse them (7[10]). They were left without leaders. With puppet kings (8[4]) and puppet gods (8[6]) to lean on, they drifted into ill-considered alliances (5[13] 7[11]). The result will be the whirlwind of destruction (8[7]).

'*I desire mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of* GOD *more than burnt offerings*' (6[6]). Characteristics of Hosea's Teaching.

Hosea's chief charge against his people is that of ignorance, and their chief ignorance is of GOD (cf. 4[1,6]). The causes are the people's vice and the priests' failure to teach. By 'knowledge' Hosea means more than mere intellectual apprehension. It is a knowledge of facts which shows itself in conduct (cf. *conscience*). The nation knew the facts of their past history (see story of Jacob, 12[3,12,4,13]), but had ceased to be moved by them. GOD Himself must recall them to true knowledge by disaster (13[8,9] 5[12]). (1) Knowledge of GOD.

'*O Israel, return unto the Lord thy* GOD' (14[1]). (2) Repentance.

Repentance with Hosea is a re-turning, a turning home to GOD as to a Father (cf. Luke 15[11–32]). Israel is a heifer that loves to thresh (10[11]), and the national religion made repentance seem easy and mechanical (5[15]–6[4]). But true penitence entails discipline and chastisement, and a waiting upon Jehovah (10[12]). They must approach Him with a prayer for pardon (14[1]), confessing their sins. Then GOD will 'heal their backsliding' and 'love them freely'.

'*When Israel was a child, then I loved him*' (11[1]). (3) The love of GOD
'*I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love*' (11[4]).

Hosea teaches, as no other prophet, the power of love.

1. It moves man to repentance ($14^{1,2}$).
2. It moves God to forgiveness ($11^{8,9}$).
3. If slighted it brings judgement (9^{17}).

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

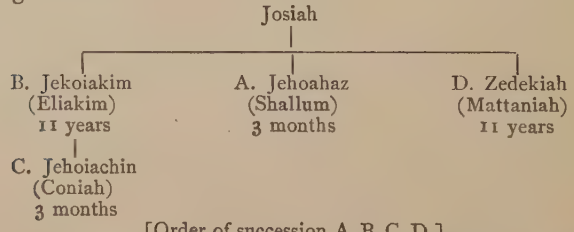
III. Judah as a surviving Monarchy

The history of Judah as a surviving monarchy may be divided into three parts:—

(*a*) The reign of Hezekiah, which coincided with the last part of the eighth century and the beginning of the seventh, during which period the Assyrian armies made several incursions into Palestine, leaving Jerusalem, however, inviolate, where the worship of Jehovah maintained its ascendancy.

(*b*) A period of reaction under Manasseh and Amon (*c.* 690–639 B.C.).

(*c*) A period including the reigns of Josiah and his sons and grandson:—



[Order of succession A. B. C. D.]

With Josiah Jewish independence died, but its overthrow was followed quickly by the fall of Assyria and the rise of the Babylonian empire, so that, when Judah went ultimately into captivity, its destination was Babylon and its captor Nebuchadrezzar.

(a) The Reign of Hezekiah.

The date of the accession of Hezekiah is uncertain, but whether one of the earlier dates (727 or 720 B.C.) or the later date (715 B.C.) be accepted, the chief event of the period was the fall of Samaria, 721 B.C. The danger of invasion from the north was thereby increased; nevertheless

the party which looked to Egypt for help, was busy planning revolt against Assyria, whilst the ambassadors of Merodach-baladan were warmly received by Hezekiah (2 Kings 20^{12-19}). The folly of this policy of resistance was proved by the victories of Sargon at Raphia, 719 B.C., and at Ashdod, 711 B.C. The accession of Sennacherib, 705 B.C., was the signal for a general revolt among the subject states of Assyria; among others, Hezekiah made preparations for resistance (2 Kings 20^{20} 2 Chron. $32^{2-8,30}$), for which there was plenty of time since Sennacherib was occupied with Merodach-baladan in Babylon. But in 701 B.C. he was ready to turn against Palestine. Advancing by the coast route he overthrew Phoenicia and reduced Ashkelon to submission, though Ekron (whose king, Padi, an Assyrian vassal, had been deposed and handed over to Hezekiah) continued to resist. In due course Arab troops joined the forces at Jerusalem and allies came up from the south, but only to be defeated at Eltekeh, and after fierce resistance Ekron was taken by Sennacherib, whose armies also invested Judah and blockaded Jerusalem. To save the Holy City Hezekiah paid tribute and freed Padi, and so gained time (2 Kings 18^{13-16}). A second attempt on the part of the Rabshakeh to take the city by diplomacy proved unsuccessful, so that after suffering the extremes of hope and despair, Jerusalem was for the time being safe, for Sennacherib was forced to withdraw to his own land, recalled by the voice of rumour (2 Kings 18^{11-37} 19^{1-8}).

The events referred to in 2 Kings 19^{9-35} probably belong to a period some ten or twelve years later, when, advancing to meet the forces of Taharka, Sennacherib was forced by a visitation of plague to return to his own land, where in 681 B.C. he was murdered by his sons (2 Kings $19^{36,37}$).

The reforms of Hezekiah (2 Kings $18^{3,4}$) must have been carried out during some temporary respite in his reign, probably the more far-reaching of them after 701 B.C., when the sanctity of Jerusalem was vindicated by its safety; this perhaps rendered possible that centralization of worship which

was effected by Josiah. Reform, however, was followed by reaction.

(b) Manasseh and Amon.

The death of Hezekiah was succeeded by the most terrible period in the history of Judah. During the long peace of Manasseh's reign idolatry was restored, and the righteous were subjected to bitter persecution (2 Kings 21^{1-18}). The foreign policy of the king, who seems to have withheld tribute from Asar-haddon (681–668 B.C.), led to Assyrian retaliation, and it is said that Manasseh was carried captive to Babylon by Assur-banipal (668–625 B.C.) (2 Chron. 33^{11-13}. Manasseh's Prayer in the Apocrypha). If on his return he attempted a reform it met with small success (2 Chron. 33^{14-20}), for the reign of Amon is practically a continuation of that of his father (2 Kings 21^{19-26}).

ISAIAH (chapters 1–39).

[CHIEF SOURCES: *Isaiah*, vol. i, and *Jerusalem*, vol. ii, pp. 117–180, G. A. Smith. *Isaiah*, vol. i (Century Bible), Whitehouse. *Isaiah* i–xxxix (Cambridge Bible Series), Skinner.]

Isaiah the Man.

From his book it may be gathered that Isaiah was a member of some family in Jerusalem and closely connected with the court. Note his name, meaning *Jehovah's Deliverance*, which became an omen of his work. His home was in Jerusalem itself: there he exercised his ministry, and the city formed the centre of all his thoughts.

His life falls naturally into three periods—

(*a*) Apprenticeship under Uzziah and Jotham.

(*b*) Opposition to the idolatrous and cowardly Ahaz.

(*c*) Support to the well-intentioned but weak Hezekiah.

Divisions of the Book.

Ch. 1. Preface. Date uncertain, probably late in Isaiah's life.

A. $2–5^{25}$ $9^{8}–10^{4}$ 5^{26-30} 6. Introductory.

B. $7–9^{7}$. Reign of Ahaz. Prophecies written at the time of the Syro-Israelitish invasion.

C. $10^{5}–11^{9}$. Prophecies connected with the fall of Samaria (721 B.C., and cf. 28^{1-6}).

D. 20. Prophecy belonging to the link period between the fall of Samaria and Sennacherib's invasion.

E. 28–32. Prophecies connected with the Egyptian alliances.

F. 22 33. Prophecies connected with the invasion of Sennacherib.

G. 13–19 21 23. Oracles to foreign nations, of varying authorship and date.

The following chapters also, without doubt, belong to a later date, probably after the return from exile:—11^{10-16}, a prophecy of return and pre-eminence; 12, a psalm of thanksgiving; 24–27 (vide p. 38), 34–35, a denunciation of Edom, whose fate is contrasted with the glorious prospects of the people of Judah; and 36–39, transferred by a compiler from the Book of Kings, and containing an account of the Assyrian invasions, Hezekiah's sickness, and the embassy of Merodach-baladan.

Preface. 'The Great Assize.' ch. 1.

This chapter was probably written late in the prophet's life, and owes its position to its character, as one of the most representative of his prophecies. It is a clear statement of the points at issue between Jehovah and His people, in the form of a Trial or Assize.[1]

God is	Plaintiff and Judge.
Heaven and Earth	are the Assessors, called in to hear the plea.
The nation	are the Defendants.
The Charge	is stupidity and rebellion, followed by ingratitude ($1^{2,3}$).
The Evidence	is the misery of the land (1^{4-9}) and the sins of the ruling classes (1^{21-23}).
The nation's plea	is laborious worship and sacrifice (1^{11-17}).
The Conclusion	is GOD's offer of pardon (1^{18}).
The Conditions	are obedience and righteousness ($1^{19,20}$).
The Witness	is the prophet.

[1] Cf. G. A. Smith's *Isaiah*, vol. i, pp. 4 ff.

NOTE.—1. GOD reasons with man, i. e. works upon him through conscience. Religion therefore demands reason. Contrast the popular view of religion as being merely ceremonial (1^{11}).

2. The controversy is *personal*. It is not the Law, but GOD Himself, who is Judge. The sin is ingratitude against a Father (1^{2}).

A. Introductory Prophecies

Isaiah's Call, ch. 6.

The chapter was probably written, not at the outset of his career, but in middle life. When the prophet had grown to feel that his mission was the burden of a life-time, and to realize that success would not come rapidly, and that his preaching might be without effect, he returned to his first vision of Jehovah, to remind himself of the nature of his call.

NOTE.—6^{1}. This does not mark a mere date, but suggests a contrast. Isaiah sees *the Lord sitting upon a throne* where he had himself perhaps seen Uzziah, the ideal king, smitten with leprosy (2 Chron. 26^{21}).

$6^{2,3}$. The seraphim cover their faces in awe, their feet in consciousness of sin, and they fly in obedient service. Contrast the three-fold sin of the nation, suggested by the story of the sin of the king (2 Chron. 26^{16-21}), callousness in worship, carelessness in life, self-seeking in religion. Isaiah now realized in the triple cry of the seraphim the sublimity, sinlessness, sovereignty of GOD.

6^{8}. The offer of service is voluntary.

6^{9-13}. The commission represents the outcome of the prophet's experience, and its force was realized by slow degrees, as he saw that GOD's ideal for the city could only be reached through captivity, and that all he could hope for was that a remnant might be saved. Cf. Mark $4^{11,12}$.

Jerusalem Uplifted, ch. 2^{1-5}.

In a short oracle, the origin of which is very doubtful (cf. Mic. 4^{1-4}), the prophet sees Jerusalem exalted as the centre of government. Jehovah bears sway over the peoples, and His rule results in the reign of justice and peace.

The prophet denounces foreign influences and alien customs which, with their accompanying idolatry, must bring ruin on the land. Jacob has forgotten to 'dwell alone', and so in spite of its military success and commercial prosperity, the prophet sees 'the day of the Lord' approaching, when men, realizing the futility of mere material props, shall seek to hide themselves from the glory of His majesty (2^{5-22}). Ruin awaits a nation whose child-king is woman-ridden, and whose chief men are oppressive and incapable; those who should intervene to save the country shrink from an impossible task, and men's 'doings are against the Lord, to provoke the eyes of his glory'. As in the days of Amos, the women are worse than the men, proud, selfish, vain, utterly unfit to meet the doom awaiting them, when the men have fallen victims to foreign invasion, and they are left to the awful fate of captivity at the hands of a barbarous invader.

Jerusalem Ruined, ch. 2^{6}–4^{1}.

Turning from this picture of death and ruin, the prophet sees Jerusalem as the home of a remnant purified by judgement and cleansed by the touch of the divine fire. God's presence dwells in its midst.

Zion Purged, ch. 4^{2-6}.

These chapters in all probability contain the prophet's last appeal to the nation before the Syro-Israelitish invasion (2 Kings 16^{5-9}). His prophecies are now clear and definite. God is about to abandon Judah.

Parable of the Vineyard, ch. 5 9^{8}–10^{4}.

In 5^{1-7}, Isaiah describes a vineyard, whereon all care had been lavished, but in vain. The owner appealed to the men of Judah to judge, and they agreed with his verdict. He must abandon the vineyard.

The Vineyard.

In 5^{8-24}, Isaiah describes in a series of 'Woes' the wild grapes which the vineyard brought forth. They are due to love of money and love of pleasure.

Wild Grapes.

In 5^{25} 9^{8}–10^{4} and 5^{26-30}, the prophet catalogues the judgements of Jehovah upon the nation, ending each with the refrain, *For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still* (cf. Amos 4^{6-11}). He teaches the persistence of God's wrath, which not only punishes, but purifies also, and

The Anger of the Lord.

the perversity of Israel's defiance. His purpose is 'to show how often Jehovah has already spoken to His people by calamity, and because they have remained hardened under these warnings, how there now remains possible only the last, worst blow of an Assyrian invasion.'[1] These calamities are: earthquake (5^{25}), loss of territory (9^{8-12}), defeat in war (9^{13-17}), anarchy (9^{18-21}), the threat of captivity (10^{1-4}), Assyrian invasion (5^{26-30}).

In these six introductory chapters are contained in germ Isaiah's greatest doctrines:—

1. The Holiness of God.
2. The sinfulness of the nation.
3. The coming of affliction, with Assyria as its instrument.
4. The survival of a purified remnant.

B. Prophecies connected with the reign of Ahaz

Hitherto Isaiah had been concerned with the morals of Jewish society; now he was to begin his career of statesmanship.

The world in Isaiah's day consisted of, firstly, the two great empires, Assyria to the north-east, aggressive and powerful, but continually hampered by the hardly-conquered province of Babylon, and Egypt in the south-west, weakened by constant struggle with the Ethiopians up the Nile; secondly, nearer to Israel lay the formidable kingdom of Syria (now, however, approaching its end), which had hitherto exerted a powerful influence upon the politics of Israel and Judah, while at the same time opposing a barrier between them and Assyria; thirdly, the Phoenician towns of Tyre and Sidon, strong enough to offer resistance to the great empires, and rich enough to excite them to conquest; finally, a number of petty states, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, and Edom, important only as make-weights in the struggle for the empire of the world. As the Assyrian empire encroached more and more upon

[1] G. A. Smith, *Isaiah*, vol. i, p. 49.

Palestine, the smaller states were forced into union against their common foe. But they had no motive for union except fear, no idea of a common humanity, no settled policy: their politics were 'the politics of a people at bay—the last flicker of dying nationalities'.[1]

Unlike Israel, Judah was comparatively secure. She did not lie on the great war-trail between Assyria and Egypt, and was insignificant enough to escape notice. Her surest policy therefore was neutrality, such neutrality as Isaiah urged upon her, and it was the folly of her rulers and statesmen which brought her into the conflict.

Isaiah's Policy in the Reign of Ahaz, ch. 7–9⁷.

Contrast the action of king and prophet—in each case prompted by his character. Ahaz is panic-stricken, Isaiah stands unmoved because he relies on Jehovah. (Note that Ahaz in despair sacrifices his son, 2 Kings 16³, but Isaiah names his son Shear-Jashub, 'a remnant shall return,' Isa. 7³.) The crucial moment is that in which Ahaz decides to call in the help of Assyria.

(1) With king, ch. 7.

1. Before this, Isaiah seeks to encourage Ahaz (7¹⁻⁹).

2. Afterwards he taunts him with the results of his folly (7¹⁰⁻²⁵).

Note the meeting at the conduit, where Ahaz was examining his water-supply, Isaiah's statesmanlike advice and courage based on faith (7⁴⁻⁹), the offer of a sign of deliverance (7¹¹), its rejection by Ahaz (7¹²), and finally, the sign of ruin forced upon the king (7¹⁴⁻¹⁷). A Child shall be born, by name Immanu-El, 'God with us,' and before he comes to years of discretion, he shall eat the food of a conquered people. Ahaz' policy has marred all the future of his race.

(2) With people, ch. 8¹⁻¹⁸.

When the king failed, Isaiah appealed to the nation.

(*a*) 8¹⁻⁴ contains a prophecy of captivity before Ahaz finally summoned Assyria. The name Mahershalalhashbaz, *speed—spoil—hurry—prey*, first written on the board, and then given to Isaiah's son, is a token of a twofold invasion by Assyria (8⁴).

(*b*) 8⁵⁻¹⁸ refers to the time after Ahaz has invited Assyrian

[1] G. A. Smith, *Isaiah*, vol. i, p. 98.

aid. Judah has forgotten its God, and has 'mixed itself with the nations', disregarding old customs and duties, typified by the waters of Shiloah (8^6). This folly must bring upon them the flood of Assyrian invasion (8^7). God (Immanuel), who might have been their Helper, has become the cause of their downfall (8^{14}). Only with the remnant (8^{18}) is there any hope.

(3) Deliverance, ch. 8^{19}–9^7.

The people failed, and Isaiah foresees captivity. Probably these verses (8^{21}–9^7) date from the time of Israel's first exile (cf. 2 Kings 15^{29}), and the shock of it moves the prophet to pity and a great hope. Captivity is changed to triumph (9^2), a 'mutilated' to a 'multiplied' nation (9^3), oppression is over and peace reigns (9^{4-5}). The Author of all this is the Messianic Child, whose throne is established in righteousness (9^{6-7}).

C. Prophecies connected with the fall of Samaria

Threatened overthrow of Assyria, ch. 10^{5-34}.

In 721 B.C. Samaria fell, as Isaiah had foreseen (28^{1-6}), and Judah found herself face to face with Assyria. There was apparently nothing to prevent Sargon's march southward, and the captivity of Judah. Isaiah sets at nought the only thing which the nation thought could save it, i.e. Ahaz' treaty with Tiglath-Pileser. He makes Sargon boast of his intention (*vv.* 7–11), and even describes his probable march south upon a people cowering before him (*vv.* 28–32). But just at the moment of the Assyrian's triumph the prophet sees him struck down and fall like a forest of cedars (*vv.* 33–34). He tells the Assyrian that he has no cause for pride. He who boasts that the whole earth is to him merely like a bird's nest to be robbed (*v.* 14) is himself no more than the axe in the hand of its master (*v.* 15). There is a Power stronger than that which has swept away the gods of the nations. The cure for the atheism due to force (the boastfulness of Assyria) and the atheism due to fear (the cowardice and intrigue of Judah) is belief in God, 'Almighty and All-Methodical'. The over-

throw of Assyria is followed by an era of peace under the rule of an ideal King (11^{1-9}; cf. p. 36). Reign of Peace, ch. 11^{1-9}.

D. Link Period 720–705 B.C.

During these fifteen years Judah was steadily drifting towards alliance with Egypt. In 719 B.C. Sargon inflicted upon Egypt a crushing defeat at Raphia, and the Egyptian policy was for a time discredited, but nevertheless, Egypt continued to intrigue with all the neighbouring states. Isaiah's Policy with regard to Egypt.

In 711 Sargon placed a puppet-king upon the throne of Ashdod, a Philistine city which had revolted. At this juncture Isaiah was bidden to walk 'naked and barefoot', i.e. in the garb of a captive, for three years through the streets of Jerusalem, to warn the nation of the coming fate of Egypt and her allies. When Ashdod again revolted and placed on the throne a friend of Pharaoh, Sargon came in person, overthrew the city, and proved the fruitlessness of Egyptian promises. ch. 20.

E. Prophecies connected with the Egyptian Alliances

Isaiah calls upon Judah to take warning from the approaching fate of Samaria, when the glory of Ephraim shall be trampled in the mire. But his hearers mock him (*vv.* $^{9-10}$), calling his solemn words teaching fit for babes. Isaiah turns their own taunts against them. If they neglect his teaching, God will teach them by 'men of strange lips' (*v.* ^{11}), and with the terrible simplicity and monotony of deeds. (a) ch. 28. Warning from Samaria.

The people trusted for security to treaties—whether Ahaz' treaty with Assyria, or some secret alliance with Egypt. Such treaties are 'covenants with Death and Hell' (*v.* ^{15}), and can only lead to discomfort and distress (*v.* ^{20}). Their truest policy is quiet confidence in God (*v.* ^{16}). Jewish alliances.

Isaiah proceeds to justify his confidence by a parable. If the husbandman is methodical and careful, shall not God also be so? There is a meaning and a plan in His use of Assyria. 'He also is wise' (31^{2}). God's method.

(b) ch. 29–31. Prophecies against Egyptian alliances.

The accession of Sennacherib led to a general revolt. He first marched on Babylon, the subjugation of which took three years. During that time Hezekiah and the Jewish politicians turned once more to Egypt, and against their meaningless, faithless policy, Isaiah hurls the prophecies of these three chapters.

ch. 29.

1. Siege is coming. Within a year, Ariel, the Lion of God and the Hearth of God, shall be brought low (29^{1-4}), though her invaders shall disappear immediately (29^{5-8}).

2. The nation cannot understand his message, or see the facts in their true bearing. They are like men suddenly startled from sleep (29^{9-12}).

3. The cause of their lack of discernment is to be found in the formality of the national religion, which they have divorced from daily life, and in their confidence in the politicians, who are working in defiance of God's purposes. Therefore God must do a 'marvellous work', which, unlike their ineffective policy, will prove the truth of the prophet's utterances, teach the people reverence, and change the national temper.

ch. 30.

4. The Egyptian alliance, for which they have made heavy sacrifices, is leading to disaster (30^{1-7}). It is the result of wilful disobedience and a love of falsehood, and so the policy to which they trust will be like a wall that falls on those whom it ought to protect. True wisdom lies in 'quietness and confidence', but they are bent upon a course which means ruin (30^{8-17}).

5. Out of judgement shall come consolation. Siege shall come with privation, but God Himself shall be in their midst (30^{18-26}). Punishment, which at first appeared to be the outcome of unbridled wrath (30^{27-28}, and note development in the metaphors), shall reveal itself as discipline and mercy to God's people, and destruction to His enemies (30^{29-33}).

ch. 31.

Three truths which summarize the previous chapters—

1. God is *wise* (*v.* 2). He will bring to nought their politics, and has Himself a policy which cannot be frustrated.

2. God is *fierce* and *persistent* as a 'lion' (*v.* 4)—fierce to meet the enemies of Jerusalem, whether invaders or politicians—persistent in His hold upon the city.

3. God is *tender* as a 'mother-bird' (*v.* 5), and will protect His own.

God's protecting care ultimately brings about an ideal rule (32 1–8, vide p. 36). ch. 32.

In contrast to a passage (which may be of earlier date) denouncing the women of Judah as frivolous and indifferent to judgement, there follows a promise of righteousness, peace, and security (32 9–20).

F. Prophecies connected with the Invasion of Sennacherib

The chronology of Hezekiah's reign, and particularly the exact order of the events of Sennacherib's invasion, are still very obscure. It is therefore almost impossible to say definitely to what period or periods the events described in ch. 22 are to be assigned, and to give a detailed explanation of their meaning. The following account has good authority:—

In 701 Sennacherib marched south and encamped at Ekron, a Philistine town, ravaging the country round (cf. 1 7–9). The people in Jerusalem waited anxiously, but still clung firmly to their two supports, the Temple-worship (1 11–15) and their foreign alliance. But when the news came that the forces, which had advanced to meet Sennacherib, were defeated at Eltekeh, the last hope of the city failed. Isaiah describes a city in panic (22 1–14). The government gave way, the rulers fled (22 3). There was no battle or defeat, no attempt at resistance. ch. 22. Panic.

With the failure of the alliance, their religion failed too. The people engaged in mad revel (*vv.* 12,13). Formal religion turned to blasphemy, and Isaiah wept over the city (*vv.* 1,2). His hopes were almost gone. There was nothing left but to appeal to the hills to fall (*v.* 5).

A change, ch. 22[15–25].

Suddenly a new policy began, with a change of ministry. Shebna, a foreigner, was dismissed (*vv.* [16–18]) and Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, appointed in his stead. As a result of this change, probably now guided by Isaiah, Hezekiah submitted and paid tribute (2 Kings 18[14]). All else must be abandoned to save the remnant.

Isaiah's Vindication. ch. 36–37.

When the Assyrians returned under the Rabshakeh, Isaiah's position was entirely changed. Hitherto he had been scoffed at by all as a visionary, insulted by Ahaz, mimicked by drunken nobles, despised by politicians, who made treaties and alliances without his knowledge and against his will. Now he was the counsellor of the king, the support of the nation. Therefore, when the Rabshakeh arrived, he found no weak king or crushed people, as he had expected, but strong, quiet resistance. The city, once demoralized and panic-stricken, was now courageous and calm, ready to show its penitence by meeting the Assyrian once more. The Rabshakeh was met by stubborn silence, and returned to his master discomfited (36–37[8]).

The story of Sennacherib's letter and Isaiah's reply, with the destruction of the Assyrian host, may be either a second account of the same events, or more probably refers to a later invasion, some ten or twelve years afterwards (38[9–38]). The deliverance from Assyria vindicated the truth of the prophet's teaching, and crowned his efforts after half a century with success.[1]

ch. 33.

This chapter deals with the events referred to in 37–38 from the prophetic standpoint, though it may have been written at a later period.

It opens with a defiance flung at Assyria (*v.* [1]), a prayer for deliverance (*v.* [2]), and a description of the scattering of the Assyrian hosts.

vv. [7–12] describe in retrospect the failure of the Jewish ambassadors to treat with Sennacherib, and the broken treaty, and God's resolve to defend His city (*vv.* [10–12]). The

[1] Cf. G. A. Smith's *Jerusalem*, vol. ii, pp. 165–74.

people, stunned by fear, awake to the fact that they are free (*vv.* 17–19). Jerusalem is once more a 'quiet habitation'. There will be no need for defence, for Jehovah in majesty will be there (*vv.* 20–22).

'GOD with us' implies forgiveness (*v.* 24). It is sin which separates man from GOD, and when sin is done away with, GOD gives man back Himself. GOD's Presence Forgiveness.

When they see the signs of Jehovah's presence in their midst, 'the sinners in Zion are afraid' (*v.* 14). They realize that the presence of GOD is as a fire, before which nothing can stand that is false, weak, or unholy—that character alone can survive, that, in the end, nothing can exist but what is like GOD. GOD's Presence a Consuming Fire.

Prophecies considered Messianic

When Isaiah's work began, there was prevalent among the people the expectation of a glorious King who should be of the house of David, and fulfil the national desires for greatness and independence. Isaiah saw that GOD would deal with the nation by judgement, in order to establish ultimately a kingdom of righteousness, and he connected the establishment of the kingdom with the coming of a personal Deliverer of David's line, who should rule in Zion when it had been purified by discipline (cf. 4^4). It was when the kingdom of Judah was at its lowest depths of degradation, with Ahaz, a traitor to GOD and his country, on the throne, that Isaiah delivered the first of these prophecies.

These verses contain the 'sign' given to Ahaz after he had refused it under a pretext of piety (vide p. 29). A child shall be born, and before he shall come to years of discretion Syria and Ephraim shall be destroyed. But the child is to bear the name Immanuel, significant of the Presence of GOD, and itself suggestive of the Messiah, who should be born, not to inherit the throne of Ahaz, but to share the sufferings of His people. (1) ch. 7^{14-15}. Immanu-El.

In contrast to the gloom of Israel's captivity, Isaiah (2) ch. 9^{1-7}.

The Messianic Child.

describes a splendour of peace (vide p. 30), whose author shall be the Messianic Child. The title 'Wonderful Counsellor' suggests His wisdom in kingly counsel, 'Mighty God,' His divine power, 'Everlasting Father,' His fatherly tenderness for His people, and 'Prince of Peace', the character of His government. He is no longer a Sufferer but a Redeemer.

(3) ch. 11^{1-9}. Character of the Messiah's Rule.

Assyria has fallen and is left without a future ($10^{33,34}$, and vide pp. 30, 31). But Isaiah sees a future for Judah. *There shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse.* The spirit of God shall be upon Him, giving Him insight and sympathy to know, and judgement and strength to perform, spiritual capacity and piety such as are acquired in the presence of God. In the rule of such a one there can be nothing superficial: He shall judge with righteousness and justice, and the result of His reign shall be peace, not only among men but in nature (*vv.* $^{6-10}$). The antagonism between man and the animals due to man's sin and oppression shall disappear, and nature shall share in man's redemption (cf. Rom. $8^{19,22}$).

(4) ch. 32^{1-8}. An Ideal for Man.

Isaiah first describes a just government (*v.* ^{1}). This is due to the personal influence of great characters (*v.* ^{2}), of which the Messiah is the Inspirer. Such characters are like 'the shadow of a great rock in a weary land', i.e. they have the power to arrest evil habits in society, and under their shelter life can flourish. The influence of such men makes for truthfulness (*v.* ^{5}), and the power to see the truth. The worthless man shall not be called 'princely', nor the cheat 'fortunate'. Things shall be called by their right names, and men shall see clearly the distinction between right and wrong.

G. Oracles concerning Foreign Nations

Chapters 13–19, 21, 23.

Portions of these chapters evidently belong to a period either before or after the age of Isaiah, but as they have been grouped together in the book as foreign oracles, it seems best to treat them consecutively. Note that numbers 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, and 11 throw light upon the period of Isaiah's life.

(1) $13–14^{23}$. *temp.* Cyrus. The enemies of Babylon, notably the Medes, attack the city, causing great destruction. The city is left desolate, and its site becomes the haunt of wild animals. The poet exults in a taunt-song over its fate. The earth is at rest now that the oppressor is no more. He has gone down to Sheol, there to receive an ironical greeting from the other nations (cf. Ezek. $32^{17–32}$). (1) Babylon.

(2) $14^{24–27}$. *c.* 701 (?). These verses forecast the doom of Assyria (cf. $10^{5–34}$). (2) Assyria.

(3) $14^{28–32}$. Philistia is warned not to rejoice. She may have escaped one oppressor (Sargon?), but a second (Sennacherib?) shall appear. Safety lies in alliance with Judah. (3) Philistia.

(4) 15, 16. *temp.* Jeroboam II and Uzziah, with an epilogue ($16^{13,14}$) added by Isaiah. Moab is invaded and the inhabitants flee; the protection which Judah could offer is for some reason refused, and Moab is left to her fate. In the epilogue Isaiah affirms that the fall of Moab is imminent. (4) Moab.

(5) $17^{1–11}$. *temp.* Ahaz. Damascus and Ephraim are doomed. Only a remnant shall survive in Israel, which shall return to allegiance to Jehovah. (5) Damascus and Ephraim.

(6) (*a*) $17^{12–14}$. *c.* 704. The Assyrian hosts advance like a raging sea, but at the rebuke of Jehovah they flee. (6) Assyria and Ethiopia.

(*b*) 18. *c.* 704. The prophet bids the ambassadors of Ethiopia return with a message of re-assurance, in which all the world shall share. Instead of the fruits of victory Assyria shall reap a harvest of disaster.

(7) 19. (A collection of prophecies, probably of different dates, some sections belonging to 725–705 B.C.) Disaster is soon to fall upon the land of Egypt. After it has seen the judgement of Jehovah, it shall learn to know the Lord, and shall join with Judah and Assyria (Syria?) to worship God. (7) Egypt.

(8) $21^{1–10}$. *temp.* Cyrus. Babylon is attacked by Medes and Elamites. The prophet sees them advance to victory, and is seized with anguish at the thought of the overthrow of so great a city. (8) Babylon.

(9) $21^{11–12}$. Date uncertain. A cry of despair is heard out of (9) Dumah (Edom).

the 'night' from Edom, and the prophet answers that though there is hope for the moment, the 'night' will again fall.

(10) Arabia. (10) 21^{13-17}. Date uncertain. Companies of Dedanites take refuge from invasion in the thickets, and are succoured by other Arab tribes.

(11) Tyre. (11) 23. (A collection of prophecies, possibly of different dates.) The Phoenicians are in consternation at the fall of Tyre, and Egypt shares their grief. The inhabitants are forced to flee to Tarshish, for Jehovah has overthrown Tyre and her dependencies (23^{1-12}). After two generations Tyre shall revive and her commerce shall be contributory to the true religion.

Chapters 24–27.

Much of this group of chapters is apocalyptic in character, and there are many evidences of late date.

ch. 24. The earth herself suffers for man's sin (24^{1-13}). Those who survive the destruction raise strains of joy, but the prophet will take no part in the song, for the Day of the Lord is at hand (24^{14-23}).

ch. 25. In contrast to the cataclysm described in ch. 24, there follows a song in praise of God and His triumph over His enemies. All nations shall acknowledge God (25^{6}). He shall take away the veil of ignorance and sorrow from human life (25^{7}). He shall swallow up death for ever, and 'wipe away tears from off all faces' (25^{8}).

The triumph of Judah's God includes the overthrow of Moab (25^{9-12}).

ch. 26. Ch. 26 opens with another psalm sung to Jehovah, whose ways are righteous and who protects the just (26^{1-10} and cf. 12). The power of Jehovah is seen in the deliverance which He has wrought for His people who have called upon Him. Even the dead shall share in the glorious revival (26^{11-19}).

ch. 27. God's people are bidden to find shelter in the Day of the Lord (26^{20}–27^{1}). When the storm is past, they shall flourish as a vineyard (27^{2-6} and cf. 5^{1-7}). The discipline which Jacob has undergone will lead him to repentance (27^{7-11}). The prophecy ends with a prospect of return ($27^{12,13}$).

MICAH

[Chief Source: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. i, G. A. Smith.]

The Book.

It is doubtful whether the book of Micah is the work of one man, or of several men writing at different periods. Most critics think that ch. 1–3 were written by one man, Micah, who lived in the times of Hezekiah, and was therefore contemporary with Isaiah, while the remainder of the book is due to other authors.

Micah's Home.

'Micah the Morashtite' (1^1) was probably a native of Moresheth-Gath, a village in the Shephelah, a low range of hills lying near the Philistine border. The district has the opposite exposure to Tekoa, and is as rich and fertile as Tekoa is barren. Moreover, it was of great strategic importance, for it lay on the great trail of war and trade leading south to Egypt. Its inhabitants were sturdy farmers and shepherds, trained to watchfulness by their position on the border.

His Message contrasted with Isaiah's.

Micah was 'the prophet of the poor'[1], and spoke chiefly of the evils which affected the country people. To him, the sins of the nation seemed to be concentrated in its capital (1^5). He was no statesman like Isaiah, nor did he extend his prophetic outlook to the nations round. His message was to Judah, and he concerned himself chiefly with social life and religious duty.

Warning, ch. 1.

About the time of the fall of Samaria, he warns the people of a similar danger threatening Judah. The tide of invasion will reach even to Jerusalem (1^9). Whereas Isaiah pictures the Assyrian entering by the north (Isa. 10^{28-32}), Micah sees him coming by the south, through his own country (1^{11-16}).

Social evils.

The cause of this terrible punishment is to be found in the social sins of the nation.

ch. 2, 3.

1. *Landlords* are grasping and evict the peasants to add to their own estates (2^2), and the smaller creditors are cruel in their extortions (2^8). In punishment they shall be driven forth from their lands by the heathen (2^4).

[1] G. A. Smith, *Book of the Twelve*, vol. i, p. 386.

2. *Rulers* love injustice and 'flay' the poor ($3^{2,3}$). The time will come when they shall call upon Jehovah, and He will not hear them (3^{4}).

3. *False prophets* teach lies for the sake of gain (3^{5}) and so their power of vision shall be taken from them (3^{6}).

4. All alike are guilty of oppression, Jerusalem is 'built of blood', and therefore shall be 'plowed as a field' (3^{10-12}).

Ideal Jerusalem, ch. 4^{1-7}.

Compare the account in this book with Isa. 2^{2-4}, and note differences.

The last verses of ch. 4 describe siege and blockade. 'In the immediate future humiliation and exile are in store for Zion; yet ultimately she will be victorious over the nations which muster to destroy her.'[1]

Prophecy of the Shepherd Messiah, ch. 5^{2-6}.

From Bethlehem shall come forth a King, of David's house, to rule over a united nation and repel Assyria (5^{2-6}). Note the stress laid upon the rustic and popular origin of the Messiah.

Israel is to be a source of blessing to some (5^{7}) and of terror to others ($5^{8,9}$). Finally God will execute vengeance upon the nations that have not hearkened to Him (5^{10-15}).

Reasonableness of True Religion, ch. 6^{1-8}.

This passage, like Isa. 1 (q.v.), is in the form of a trial. Man is summoned to appear before God in the theatre of Nature. The people, in perplexity, ask how they are to approach God ($6^{6,7}$), and the prophet answers with a definition of the meaning of true religion (6^{8}). Note his appeal to history (6^{3-5}).

Selfishness of Jerusalem, ch. 6^{9}–7^{6}.

The selfishness of the city is seen in its corrupt society (6^{12}), cheating in business ($6^{10,11}$), dishonesty of the nobles and judges (7^{3}), covetousness and cruelty ($7^{2,6}$). The 'godly', i. e. generous, man has perished ($7^{2a,4}$). The result must be mutual distrust and an end of family life ($7^{5,6}$).

Psalm of Penitence, ch. 7^{7-20}.

The concluding verses form a psalm, possibly composed at various dates, and give a picture of the sorrows of Israel, her penitence, and her hope of restoration, ending with a doxology (*vv.* $^{18-20}$) to the everlasting mercies of God.

[1] Kirkpatrick, *The Doctrine of the Prophets*, p. 230.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

III. Judah as a surviving Monarchy (*cont.*)

(c) Josiah and the Second Captivity.

The reign of Josiah marks a drastic religious revival. On the murder of Amon, he was placed on the throne as a child of eight years old by the political opponents of Amon's murderers (2 Kings 21^{24}), and he represents the party of reaction against the idolatry of his father and grandfather. It seems significant that his name once more incorporates the name 'Jahwe', absent from those of the last two kings.

While repairs were being made in the Temple in accordance with the king's orders, Hilkiah, the High Priest, discovered the 'Book of the Law', containing portions of the book of Deuteronomy, and sent it by Shaphan the scribe to Josiah. The king, filled with alarm at the doom hanging over Israel, consulted the prophetess Huldah, and made extensive reforms, cleansing the Temple, destroying the Asherim, defiling the high places and the sites of idolatrous worship, and centralizing the worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem. The Passover also was held with great solemnity (2 Kings 22^{3-15} $23^{1-15,21-24}$).

In the year 608 B.C. Pharaoh-Necho II marched north against Assyria, in the hope of gaining something for himself from the disintegration of the great empire. Josiah attacked him, and was defeated and killed at Megiddo, leaving Judah for the time being subject to Egypt (2 Kings $23^{29,30}$).

Jehoahaz, Josiah's second son, was placed on the throne by the people, but after a reign of three months he was summoned to Riblah by Pharaoh-Necho and carried a prisoner to Egypt, while a heavy tribute was imposed upon Judah (2 Kings 23^{33-34}).

Jehoiakim, the eldest son of Josiah, was made king by Pharaoh-Necho. He taxed the people heavily to raise the tribute due to Egypt (2 Kings 23^{35}). His rule was oppressive (Jer. 22^{13-17}), and he was superstitious, weak, and revengeful (Jer. 26 and 36).

In the third year of his reign Nineveh fell after a prolonged siege (607–606 B.C.). On the death of Assur-banipal (668–625 B.C.), the last of the great Assyrian monarchs, the empire was threatened on two sides. On the north were the Medes, lying between Mesopotamia and the Caspian Sea; on the south the Chaldeans, who had now become a formidable power, and had got possession of Babylon. For a long time mutual jealousy and fear of the dying 'lion' (Nahum 2^{11-12}) delayed their attack. But the inability of Assyria to check the inroads of the hordes of nomad Scythians who, even before the death of Assur-banipal, had swept down in a resistless flood from beyond the Caucasus to the borders of Egypt, had lessened its prestige: the internal weakness of the vast empire, whose greatness was founded on cruelty, while her army was manned by aliens, was becoming more and more manifest. Finally, the appearance of Pharaoh-Necho of Egypt to claim his share in the partition of the empire forced the attack, and while the Chaldean army kept him from further advance, the Medes marched upon Nineveh and besieged it for two years.

Meanwhile Pharaoh-Necho seized his opportunity and secured all Western Asia as far as the Euphrates. But in 605 B.C. he was signally defeated at Carchemish by Nebuchadrezzar, son of Nabopolassar of Babylon. The Medes and Chaldeans divided the spoil between them, the western half of the Assyrian empire falling to the latter, so that now Babylon plays the part formerly taken by Assyria in the affairs of Syria and Palestine (2 Kings 24^{7}).

Some three years later Jehoiakim rebelled against Babylon, but his punishment was swift. Chaldean troops, aided by Moab and Syria, checked the revolt (2 Kings $24^{1,2}$), until Nebuchadrezzar could appear in person (2 Chron. 36^{6}). The king's fate is uncertain. See 2 Kings 24^{6} 2 Chron. 36^{6} Jer. $22^{18,19}$ 36^{30}.

Jehoiachin was permitted by Nebuchadrezzar to succeed, but after three months he was suspected of intention to revolt.

Chaldean troops besieged the city until Nebuchadrezzar returned and captured it (2 Kings $24^{10,11}$). The Temple was once more plundered, the king and queen-mother, with the nobles, warriors, craftsmen, smiths and priests (Ezek. $1^{2,3}$), were carried to Babylon (2 Kings 24^{14-16}). Jehoiachin was kept in prison for thirty-seven years, and then released by Evil-merodach, but not allowed to return home (2 Kings 25^{27-30}).

Zedekiah, appointed as subject-king by Nebuchadrezzar, to whom he swore allegiance (Ezek. 17^{13}), quickly proved himself incapable. Torn between the duty of allegiance to Nebuchadrezzar and the necessity of conciliating the mistaken patriots and false prophets who were his advisers, Zedekiah showed himself vacillating and weak at the moment when the very existence of the nation was in jeopardy. A period of peace and submission was followed by a mad outbreak, when, supported by Pharaoh-Hophra, King of Egypt (589–564 B.C.), Judah sought for the last time to free herself from Babylon, and brought about the overthrow of kingdom, city, and Temple, and the deportation of the best of the people to Babylon (see p. 58). Over the 'poorest of the land', a rural population left for purposes of tillage, Nebuchadrezzar placed Gedaliah, the friend of Jeremiah. His murder by Ishmael was quickly followed by the flight of those who feared the vengeance of Babylon to Tahpanhes in Egypt, which thenceforth, like Babylon, became a centre of the dispersed Jews.

Thus at the time of the fall of the monarchy much the same conditions obtained as in the previous century. Syria once again formed the battle-ground of Egypt and a Mesopotamian power, now Babylon: again Judah looked for support to Egypt and provoked the wrath of Jeremiah as she had before brought upon herself the wrath of Isaiah; but whereas Isaiah had foreseen the survival of a remnant in an inviolate Zion, Jeremiah could only look forward to the destruction of the city and the extinction of the nation.

ZEPHANIAH

[Chief Source: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

Date. There is some question as to the date of the prophecy, but it seems probable that it was written in the early part of the reign of Josiah, before the discovery of the Book of the Law, and when the Scythian invasion was imminent ($1^{7,15-16}$). The prophet, like the king, was young, and his book has all the unsparing indignation of youth.

The Prophet. His name, 'Jehovah hath hidden,' may indicate that he was born during the persecutions in Manasseh's reign (2 Kings 21^{16}). He probably lived in Jerusalem, and to him, as to Isaiah, it was the centre of interest. Note his description of the city and its inhabitants ($1^{4,5,10,11}$).

Character of the Book. The key-note of the book is to be found in ch. 1^{2}. He proclaims judgement upon the whole world, and chiefly upon the chosen people of God. There is little sympathy in the book and no beauty (unless we accept 3^{14-20} as by Zephaniah's hand). His only hope is of a poor remnant, who shall hardly escape the anger of Jehovah (2^{3}).

Prophecy of Destruction, ch. $1-2^{3}$. Zephaniah first describes the condition of Judah, its idolatry (1^{4-6}), lack of patriotism (1^{8}), violence and fraud (1^{9}), and, most serious of all, its indifference, resulting in a denial of God's power (1^{12}). This indifference was due to reaction.

The Indifferent Man. During the persecutions in the two previous reigns men had been kept on the alert, hoping for better things, and had thought their expectations would be fulfilled in the days of Josiah. But when no miraculous reform took place, disappointment succeeded hope, and they drifted into selfish ease, excusing themselves by the plea that Jehovah would do neither good nor evil.

The Day of the Lord. For all this indifference and wickedness, Zephaniah sees punishment near at hand. First it appears vaguely as a general destruction ($1^{2,3}$), and then as a solemn slaughter-feast (1^{7}). Finally the prophet passes into an apocalyptic (?) vision (1^{14-18}).

There may be left a small remnant, but the conditions of escape are made sternly dependent on character, i.e. meekness and righteousness (2^3). The Remnant.

Zephaniah is the prophet of a judgement which is universal, though Judah is the chief victim. The remainder of ch. 2 forms an elegy on the fate of the nations, Philistia, Moab, Ammon, Ethiopia, and, as a climax, Assyria, the confidence in whose fall is strengthened by the Scythian invasion. The 'joyous city' shall be reduced to ruins. 'The owl shall hoot in the window, the raven on the doorstep'[1] (2^{14}). Oracles to Foreign Nations, ch. 2^{5-15}.

Zephaniah denounces the ruling classes, but spares the king (3^{1-4}). The nation that 'knoweth no shame' shall not escape the universal doom. Zephaniah is too near the judgement which he sees to call to repentance. His only hope is in an 'afflicted and poor people', who shall at last dwell in peace (3^{11-13}). Second Address to the City, ch. 3^{1-13}.

The book ends with a song of deliverance, probably by a later hand, after the return from exile, and added as a fulfilment of Zephaniah's hopes.

NAHUM

[Chief Source: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

The prophecy seems to have been written when the overthrow of Nineveh was imminent, i.e. about 625, when the Medes invaded Assyria, or about 607, the date of its final downfall. Date.

Nahum, like Zephaniah, pronounces judgement, but the doom threatens Nineveh alone, and is a revelation of the vengeance of God upon the oppressor of the world. Zephaniah sees that the same doom which threatens Nineveh must overwhelm Judah. Nahum, on the other hand, is not a national prophet. His book expresses the anger, vengeance, and hope of all the nations whom Assyria had crushed for more than a century. Character of the Book.

[1] G. A. Smith, *Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, p. 65.

The Vengeance of the Lord, ch. 1.

Jehovah had been patient, with the patience of Omnipotence (1^{3}), but at last He was about to rise to judgement, and make a complete end (1^{9}). The gloom is heightened by the contrasted fate of Judah ($1^{12b,13,15}$, 2^{2}).

The Siege of Nineveh, ch. 2, 3.

The siege is not yet actual: the picture is the result of Nahum's experience of the sieges which Assyria herself has conducted—hence the irony. Nineveh, who has besieged others, is herself besieged (3^{8-11}). The Lion is caught in his lair (2^{11-13}). The Assyrian empire had by this time shrunk to a small area, the kernel of which was the city of Nineveh, strongly defended by forts, walls, and moats, the latter supplied by the river Choser, which cut across the city. Tradition says that the Medes took it by opening the sluices of the Choser and so making a breach in the wall.

Stages of the Siege.

(1) Description of the invader, $2^{1,3}$; (2) the fall of the forts and gates, $3^{12,13}$; (3) the call to defend the city, $3^{14,15}$; (4) the fighting in the suburbs, 2^{4} $3^{2,3}$; (5) the retreat to the walls, 2^{5}; (6) the opening of the flood-gates, 2^{6}; (7) the flight and the spoiling of the city, $2^{7,9,10}$.

Cause of her Downfall.

The city was inhabited by a huge population, of many nationalities, held together by greed of gain, without patriotism or discipline (2^{8} $3^{5,16}$).

HABAKKUK

[Chief Source: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

Date.

The date of the book is uncertain. It may have been written at any time between the first reforms of Josiah and the fall of Jerusalem, i.e. between 621 B.C. and 586 B.C.

Habakkuk's Character.

Little is known of the prophet himself. His name comes from a root which means 'to embrace'. It was probably given to him as a child, and is peculiarly appropriate to him because of his clinging to God through a life of difficulties. His prophetic attitude is widely different from that of the other prophets. He does not attack national sins. Troubled by doubts as to the justice of God's dealings with man, he questions God on behalf of the nation, and teaches the lessons

of faith, constancy, and patience which he himself learnt in answer to his question.

A Cry to God, ch. 1.

Perplexed by the prevalence of evil which he sees everywhere around him ($1^{3,4}$), Habakkuk asks God how long it shall endure. The answer comes from the mouth of Jehovah—the Chaldeans are being raised up to execute His judgement (1^{5-12}). But this only makes the question more perplexing. How can a righteous God employ such instruments (1^{13}), and surrender the world to a tyrant who worships no god but his own might (1^{16})?

The Answer, ch. 2^{1-4}.

The prophet takes his stand upon the rampart of truth (2^{1}), and awaits the answer which God gives to him in the form of a great moral principle (2^{4}). *The just shall live in his faithfulness*, i.e. his stedfastness and loyalty to his religion. Let the righteous hold to his duty and he shall live.

Taunt-Songs, ch. 2^{5-20}.

Habakkuk then summons the nations which have been oppressed to pronounce the doom of the oppressor (2^{6}) in a series of 'Woes'. By afflicting so many nations the tyrant is preparing his own doom.

'Prayer of Habakkuk,' ch. 3.

The prophet has heard of the great deeds of Jehovah in the past, and he prays that He may manifest Himself in like manner in the present. He sees God coming as He did of old upon Sinai. The nations and all nature tremble (3^{1-15}). The prophet also trembles (3^{16}), but he has learnt his lesson, and has realized that even in face of invasion, famine, poverty (3^{17}), God is to be trusted ($3^{18,19}$). Many consider that this psalm belongs to a later age.

JEREMIAH

[Chief Sources: Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. 'Jeremiah', by A. B. Davidson. *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, Driver. *Jerusalem*, G. A. Smith, vol. ii, ch. viii, ix.]

His Times, 626–586.

For forty years Jeremiah was the prominent figure in a tragic period. 'He alone redeems the miserable downfall of his country from triviality and shame.'[1]

[1] Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. ii, p. 442.

His Surroundings. (1) Ancestry. He was born of a priestly family at Anathoth, and was probably the descendant of that Abiathar whom Solomon banished there (1 Kings 2^{26}), and so the traditions of those early days and the great part played in them by his ancestors would linger on in his family. Note his frequent allusion to the early history of the nation, and cf. Hosea.

(2) Enemies. His enemies belonged to all classes:—

(1) Degenerate kings (22^{10-30}).

(2) Idolatrous princes, military leaders, &c. (38^{4}).

(3) Priests and prophets, combined in an unholy alliance against one who, uniting both their offices, scorned their superstition and ignorance ($7^{4}\ 8^{8}\ 23^{31-32}$).

(3) Friends. A powerful group, the descendants of those influential in Josiah's day, befriended him—Ahikam and Gedaliah, son and grandson of Shaphan, and Baruch.

Character. Among the prophets Jeremiah reminds us most of Hosea, whose spirit and style is reflected in his earlier oracles. He had the same conflicting emotions—intense love of country and conviction of the national sin (17^{1-2}). He had, too, Hosea's 'knowledge' of God, but he was without his unwavering trust. Hence by his lifelong struggle he becomes the great exponent of God's power 'made perfect in weakness' ($1^{7}\ 20^{7-18}$).

Among his characteristics note:—His isolation of position ($11^{21}\ 15^{17}\ 16^{1-13}\ 20^{10}$), of mind, partly due to the hopelessness of his message ($4^{23-26}\ 5^{1}$), desire for loneliness (9^{1-2}), love of nature ($5^{22-24}\ 14^{4-6}$), melancholy, passing to despair (20^{14-16}), lack of self-confidence ($1^{6}\ 10^{23}$) contrasted with his daring as an intercessor on behalf of the nation ($14^{7-9,\ 10-13,19-22}$), his passionate outbursts of anger ($11^{20-23}\ 12^{3}\ 20^{11-13}$), his weakness ($12^{5}\ 15^{18-20}\ 38^{24-27}$). Of all the prophets he is the most frail and the most human, 'a Hamlet with a task beyond his strength.'[1]

Call, ch. 1. It came in his youth. He felt himself insufficient for the task ($1^{6,7}$), yet he was predestined to be a prophet by:—

[1] Cf. Stanley, *Jewish Church*, vol. ii, p. 444.

1. Heredity (1^1).

2. The circumstances of his times and his country's needs.

From the first there is a conflict within him; 'suggestion and resolution' are 'met by counter-suggestion and irresolution'[1]—i.e. the struggle is between God and himself.

Mission.

His sphere is wider than that of any previous prophet. He was sent to the nations (1^{10}), just at the moment when the isolation of Judah was to give place to that intercourse with the neighbouring nations which had so incalculable an effect upon history. Hence the command 'to pluck up and to break down' what was effete, as well as 'to build and to plant' what could survive. Note the symbols of the almond tree (1^{11}) ('Jehovah is wakeful')[2] and the cauldron with its face from the north (1^{13}).

His Contribution to Prophecy.

Jeremiah's contribution to prophecy may be regarded as twofold:—

(a) his life and character, especially as intercessor (note the intercessory character of Lamentations);

(b) the doctrine of the New Covenant (31^{31-34}), implying individual responsibility and a religion whose laws were written 'on the heart', and which therefore should embrace all people (16^{19-21}).

Stages of his Prophecy.

'In the earlier years Jeremiah developed his individuality and a type of personal piety independent of State, Temple, and even family, by conflict with priests, prophets, and people ($1^{5,17-19}$), and by debate with God Himself (12^{1-6}). Later he made a long slow sacrifice of the self thus won for the sake of his people.'

Prophecies before 608

Prophecies under Josiah, ch. 2–6.

In these chapters Jeremiah charges the people with ingratitude, unfaithfulness, and stupidity.

$2-4^4$. Jeremiah's verdict on the people's history from the beginning.

[1] A. B. Davidson, art. 'Jeremiah' in Hastings's *Dictionary*, p. 569.
[2] ibid., p. 570.

4^{5}–6. The inevitable issue of such a history. The gist of the passage is that unfaithfulness must lead to destruction.

ch. 2–4^{4}. The nation had forgotten the love of wilderness days ($2^{6,7,21}$), and had rejected Jehovah Himself (2^{11}), for though reforms had been made, their conception of God was still false (2^{18}), and in their stupid ignorance they did not know their sin ($2^{23,27,35}$ 5^{21}, cf. Hos. 4^{6a} Isa. 1^{3}). Jeremiah urges them to change, to learn to know the real Jehovah. The change must be thorough ($4^{1,3,4}$).

ch. 4^{5}–6. Of such repentance Jeremiah despairs. There is not a man to be found in the streets of Jerusalem (5^{1}), the nation has refused correction (5^{3b}), and when tried in the fire, it is mere dross (6^{30}). Prophets and priests are alike corrupt ($5^{30,31}$ $6^{13,14}$).

Therefore destruction must come in the form of war (4^{5-13} 5^{14-17} 6^{1-8} 6^{22-26}), and of exile (5^{19b}). Finally the prophet sees himself standing on the ashes of an extinct world, the sole survivor of the doom (4^{23-27}). The hopelessness of the message is redeemed by intense compassion ($3^{14-18,22-23}$ 4^{19}).

Book of Deuteronomy. It is almost certain that the Book of the Law discovered by Josiah in 621 B.C. (2 Kings 22^{8}), is to be found in the existing Book of Deuteronomy (see Deut. 4^{14}–26^{19} and 28). It was the attempt, by means of a new constitution, 'to infuse into the traditional observances of the Exodus Covenant Code a new set of motives and sanctions. God is one and spiritual. Love and gratitude should impel His people to worship and obey Him. The earlier prophets, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah I and Micah no doubt furnished these new motives' (Deut. $6^{4,5}$, and *passim*) [Professor Kay]. The detailed legislation of Deuteronomy promoted the welfare of every class of the population, rural as well as urban, and so emphasized the unity of the State; but the centralization of the worship at Jerusalem, which was intended to inculcate a purer monotheism by annihilating the local shrines where the elements of paganism still lingered, opened the way to formalism and elaboration, with the result that the claims of ritual were

made prior to those of morality. The importance of the Ark (3^{16}), the Law (8^{8}), the Temple and its worship ($7^{4,22}$), were unduly emphasized.

The Captivity, it is true, made much of this ceremonial worship for the time impossible, but the ethical element of Deuteronomy provided a motive for a religion which proved itself strong enough to outlast the overthrow of the nation. That this was so is largely due to the fact that at this epoch in its history the prophet Jeremiah, by his own individual experience in opposition to the official religion, illustrated a piety capable of surviving the fall of Temple, priesthood, and monarchy.

Jeremiah's attitude towards the Reform.

It is difficult to discover what share, if any, Jeremiah took in Josiah's reform, which must have caused him to leave Anathoth and take up his residence at Jerusalem, in consequence of the suppression of the local shrines. Some scholars think that 11^{1-8} implies that he went about town and country trying to enforce acceptance of the Book of the Law. He must have been in sympathy with the reformers in their fundamental aims, and the similarity of style and thought in the two books is obvious, but it would seem as if Jeremiah, like Zephaniah, despaired of lasting reform (8^{4}–9^{22}).

Jeremiah's Prophecies between 608 B.C. and 605 B.C.

Jehoahaz and early Jehoiakim. Religious Mis-beliefs ch. 7^{1-28}.

After Josiah's death at Megiddo, there seem to have been three classes of people:—

1. The rank and file of the populace, who said Josiah had come to an untimely end because Jehovah was weaker than other gods, and who wished therefore to restore idolatry (7^{16-20}).

2. Those who believed in one God, but who thought that Josiah had lost His favour and that He must be propitiated by sacrifice (7^{21-26}).

3. Those who felt that for His own honour Jehovah would never destroy the Temple (7^{1-4}).

Doom of Shiloh, ch. 7^{1-15} and ch. 26.

Jeremiah condemned all three classes (7^{27-28}), but had a special message for the third (7^{1-15} 26). He threatened Jerusalem with the fate of Shiloh, and so roused the wrath of priests and prophets that he was with difficulty saved by the interference of the princes. That his life was in great danger is proved by the fate of Uriah.

The Sin of Judah, ch. 8^{4}–9^{22} 10^{17-25}.

In these prophecies Jeremiah bewails the sins of the people, and laments the retribution which must befall them, because they have abandoned God.

Attack by Men of Anathoth, ch. 11–12^{6}.

Jeremiah exposed the faithlessness of the people to the national covenant, and proclaimed the destruction (11^{17}) which must follow their idolatry ($11^{10,13}$). He at last roused the anger of his kinsmen at Anathoth, probably by his desire to suppress the local shrine in accordance with the Deuteronomic Code (11^{1-8}), and they made a dastardly attempt upon his life (11^{19}). Though the plot failed, the strain sapped Jeremiah's strength (12^{1-6}), and moved him both to anger (12^{3b}) and self-distrust (12^{5}). (Cf. John 1^{11} and Luke 4^{29}.)

The Potter's Vessel, ch. 18.

In ch. 18 Jeremiah urges the people to repentance, for which there is still room. He goes down to the potter's house and sees him at his work. 'In the fact of the potter at his wheel changing his first plans for a lump of clay, as he finds it under his hand unsuitable to them . . . Jeremiah sees an illustration of how God may change His purpose for Israel.' [1] Hence prophecy is revocable and the national doom, the outcome of their monstrous ingratitude (18^{13-17}), might yet, if only the people were capable of repentance, be averted. The people, secure behind the teaching of the false prophets, turned on Jeremiah in fury (18^{18}), and again he broke down under the strain (18^{19-23}).

ch. 7^{29}–8^{3}, 19–20^{6}. (About the time of the battle of Carchemish.)

Jeremiah was compelled to go to the Valley of Hinnom, notorious for the worship of Moloch, and by the symbolic action of breaking a potter's finished vessel, he made clear the fact that amendment was no longer possible. The city

[1] G. A. Smith, *Jerusalem*, vol. ii, p. 242.

with its palaces (19^{13}), and sepulchres (8^{1-3}), shall be defiled, whilst the Valley of Hinnom shall be called the Valley of Slaughter (7^{32}). This speech Jeremiah repeated in the Temple, and in consequence Pashhur, the superintendent of the Temple, put him in the stocks and drew down upon himself and the nation the curse of exile ($20^{5,6}$). These trials are reflected in the tumult of emotion implied in 20^{7-18}. A similar conflict is evident in chapters $14-17^{18}$. On the occasion of a drought in Judah, Jeremiah in vain intercedes on behalf of a people who have wilfully forsaken God, who alone can save. He feels the burden of his lot and the isolation to which he is subjected, and throws himself on the mercy of God.

ch. 14–17^{18}.

Prophecies between 605 B.C. and 597 B.C.

The victory of Carchemish (vide ch. 46, possibly by a different hand), was the justification of Jeremiah's prophecy. He had long threatened Judah with invasion by a northern foe (1^{13-15}), meaning thereby in his earliest prophecies the Scythians (8^{16} 10^{17-22}), but after 605 he plainly saw that the invaders would be the Babylonians. After the defeat of Egypt the whole trend of political events became clear to him, and he took advantage of the fast proclaimed by Jehoiakim, probably in fear of coming invasion, to send a warning to the nation by means of a roll. Contrast its reception with that given to the Book of the Law, and note that though Jeremiah had to flee for his life (36^{26}), his words proved true and Jehoiakim had to submit to Nebuchadrezzar (2 Kings 24^{1}).

After 605. The effect of Carchemish on Jeremiah's position. ch. 36.

The roll seems to have contained all Jeremiah's early prophecies, and in particular a clear warning (25 36^{29}) of the Babylonian invasion. Because Judah has not listened to the warnings of Jeremiah or her earlier prophets, she is doomed to fall before Nebuchadrezzar (25^{1-11}). The cup of the Lord's fury is poured out for all the nations to drink (25^{15-33}), and the great ones of the earth shall lament (25^{34-38}). For further references to Baruch, cf. ch. 45 and 43^{3}.

Contents of the Roll.

Revolt of Jehoiakim.

Three years later, Jehoiakim revolted (2 Kings 24^{1}). Nebuchadrezzar did not at first attack him in person, but let in the neighbouring tribes to devastate Judah (2 Kings 24^{2}). In 12^{7-17}, Jehovah is described as abandoning Judah, and the invaders as well as the chosen people are threatened with exile (12^{14}), though a prospect of restoration is afterwards held out to them.

ch. 12^{7-17}.

The Rechabites, ch. 35.

The Rechabites were Kenites, and to this tribe had belonged Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. In the wilderness they had been to the Israelites 'instead of eyes' (Num. 10^{29-32}). They had settled in the extreme north and south of Canaan (Judges 1^{16} 4^{17} ff.), and were apparently much attached to the national cause. They were noted for their religious zeal, were Nazirites, and had rules which bound them to a nomadic life (35^{8-10}). Jehonadab, a distinguished member of their order, had played an important part in the overthrow of Baal-worship (2 Kings 10^{15-28}).

Jeremiah tested their faithfulness under adverse circumstances, and contrasted their loyalty to the commands of Jehonadab with the disloyalty of Judah to its God. Compare the curse pronounced upon Judah (35^{17}) with the promise made to the Rechabites (35^{19}). See Neh. 3^{14}, and for the principle involved see Exod. 20^{12}.

Reign of Jehoiachin and the Great Captivity, 597

Jehoiachin, 597. The Great Captivity.

During the three months' reign of Jehoiachin a great captivity of Judah took place. Three of Jeremiah's prophecies deal with this event (13 24 29), though probably they were not written during this reign.

Symbolic Action with the Girdle, ch. 13.

By means of a symbolic action with a girdle (13^{1-11}), followed by a parable (13^{12-14}), Jeremiah shows the corrupt condition of the people and its consequences. After a renewed appeal for amendment (13^{15-17}) he realizes that his words have no effect (13^{23}), and the chapter closes with lamentation.

Jeremiah compares the two sections of the nation, the exiles and those left behind, to two baskets of figs, good and bad, and suggests the different future in store for each. His hope for the future lay with the exiles, and history fulfilled his expectation. Parable of the Figs, ch. 24.

Jeremiah exhorts the exiles to settle down contentedly where they are, to preserve their religious and social life, and to 'seek the peace of the city' of their captivity, for, in spite of the hopes raised by the false prophets ($29^{8,9,21-23}$), there would be no return until after seventy years. After two generations a disciplined and purified people would return. Letter to the Captives, ch. 29.

As a result of this letter, the wrath of the false prophets in Babylon was roused, and one of them, Shemaiah, wrote to Jerusalem, urging Jeremiah's arrest. But his plot failed, and he brought upon himself a curse like that pronounced against Pashhur.

After an introductory passage (22^{1-9}, cf. $21^{11,12}$), in which Jeremiah urges the kings to do justice, lest their fancied security end in disaster, there follow: Condemnation of the Kings, ch. $22-23^{8}$.

(*a*) A lament for Jehoahaz (Shallum), whose sad fate of exile is contrasted with the less sad fate of his father Josiah (22^{10-12}).

(*b*) A curse upon the tyranny and selfishness of Jehoiakim, whose fate is ignominious (22^{13-19}).

(*c*) A lament for Jehoiachin (Coniah), who is to pass into exile without hope of return (22^{20-30}). 23^{1-8} forms the climax of this group of prophecies. In place of the false shepherds, Jehovah Himself shall gather His flock and set true shepherds over them, and in the future a King of the house of David shall arise, whose title, 'The Lord our Righteousness,' suggests the Messiah.

Prophecies connected with the Reign of Zedekiah and the Fall of Jerusalem

Zedekiah was set on the throne by Nebuchadrezzar as a vassal king (Ezek. 17^{11-21}). The people were humiliated and Zedekiah, 597–586.

exasperated, their leaders removed, no wisdom was left to direct, no strength to execute, no moral principle among governors or governed. All the old evils had gathered to a head, and all the intellectual, experienced, and moderate men were in exile (2 Kings 24^{14}). The people left were more irreligious and irresponsible than ever.

Through the western states there spread a spirit of revolt. Edom, Moab, Ammon, and the Phoenician states sent embassies to Zedekiah (27^{3}), and the prophets in Babylonia were stirring up the exiles to hope for a speedy return ($29^{8,9}$).

Symbolic Action with 'Bands and Bars', ch. 27.

Jeremiah, by a symbolic action, exposed to the ambassadors of the neighbouring tribes, as well as to the king, prophets, priests, and people, the futility of resistance to Nebuchadrezzar, to whom had been given the rule over Western Asia (27^{6}).

Contest with Hananiah, ch. 28.

Having appealed to king, envoys, priests, and people, Jeremiah, wearing a wooden yoke, was confronted by Hananiah, a prophet. The two met in the Temple court, and the contest raged about the fate of the Temple vessels (28^{3}). The gist of the whole controversy is contained in the two sentences, 'Serve the King of Babylon and live' (27^{17}), and 'Ye shall not serve the King of Babylon' (27^{14}).

Hananiah tore the wooden collar from Jeremiah's neck and snapped it asunder as a sign that deliverance would come. For the moment Jeremiah's confidence in the truth of his belief seems to have been shaken, but after a time it was restored, and he warned Hananiah that for the broken yoke of wood, he had by his false encouragements forged a still harder yoke of iron, and that within a year he himself must die.

Following on this struggle with Hananiah came Jeremiah's second contention with the false prophets at Babylon (29 and see p. 55), whom he cursed in his letter to the captives for misleading the exiles ($29^{21,22,31,32}$).

False Prophets, ch. 23^{9-40}.

Jeremiah denounced the false prophets, upon whom judgement must fall, inasmuch as they had degraded their

gift, and had spoken lies in the name of Jehovah. They professed to have stood in 'the council of God' (23^{18}), and yet had encouraged the people in sin (23^{22}), and prophesied smooth things (cf. 14^{13-15}). In their ignorance they claimed inspiration for the inventions of their own hearts ($23^{25,26}$), and forgot that the eyes of Jehovah were upon them (23^{24}). They had, moreover, appropriated the words of the true prophets (23^{30}), and put them to false usages. The word *Massa* (*oracle* and *burden*),[1] which they had misused, was to be no more used in Israel of the word of Jehovah (23^{33-40}).

(For sources see 2 Kings 25^{1-22} Jer. 52 Lam. *passim*; Ezek. 4–24 *passim*.)

Siege of Jerusalem, Jan. 587 to July 586.

After seven or eight years Zedekiah, urged by the nobles and supported by Egypt (Ezek. 17^{5-10}), revolted. The people trembled (Ezek. 21^{7}). Nebuchadrezzar advanced after settling his route (Ezek. 21^{19-22}). Edom joined the enemy (Obad. $^{10-14}$).

Chaldean Advance.

The siege began on the tenth day of the tenth month of the ninth year of Zedekiah. Vigorous measures of defence were adopted (Jer. 33^{4}), but the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel pronounced doom (Jer. 21^{3-10} Ezek. 7^{1-13}). The alternatives were surrender with life and peace, or resistance with destruction and death (Jer. 21^{9})

Attack.

At last Pharaoh Hophra advanced and the Chaldeans withdrew to meet him. There was jubilation in the city (Jer. 34^{8-22}), but the Egyptians were flung back on their own borders, and the siege was renewed. Famine now appeared in the crowded city. The rich died (Lam. 1^{19} $4^{5,7,8}$ 5^{10}). The children suffered (Lam. $2^{11,12,19}$ 4^{4}). Arab tribes repulsed the efforts made to obtain provisions (Lam. 5^{9}). Despair showed itself in fanatical zeal (Ezek. $7^{18,19}$), and the renewal of heathen practices (Ezek. 8 *passim*).

Egyptian Advance.

On the ninth day of the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the Chaldeans entered the Northern gate by night (Ezek. 9^{2}). The troops made their way within the Temple courts (Jer. 39^{3}). Ezekiel in vision saw the cherubim

Assault.

[1] Cf. Driver, *The Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, pp. 139–40.

depart (Ezek. 10^{18} $11^{22,24}$), and then the slaughter began and the streets ran red like a wine-press in vintage (Lam. 1^{15}).

Fate of the King.

At dawn these horrors would be seen from below. King and court escaped through a narrow alley south-east of the city (Jer. 52^{7}), and were pursued into the steppes of Jericho. The troops fled (Jer. 52^{8} Ezek. 12^{14}). The enemy swooped like eagles (Lam. 4^{19}), and the king was captured and taken to Riblah, where the vengeance for his broken oath overtook him (Ezek. 17^{19} Jer. 52^{9-11}).

Fate of the City.

A month later Nebuzaradan was sent to raze Jerusalem to the ground. After having seized all that was worth taking of the spoil (including, probably, the ark), Nebuzaradan destroyed the Temple, houses, and walls of the city (Jer. 52^{12-23}), and Zion became 'a ploughed field', 'a place where foxes walked', while vengeance was taken on all classes of those who had resisted (Jer. 52^{24-27}).

Prophecies during the Siege, ch. 21^{1-10}.

At the beginning of the siege, Zedekiah sent to inquire of Jeremiah about its issue. The answer is contained in 21^{1-10} (cf. 34^{1-7}). Jehovah Himself is on the side of the enemy. City and king are doomed, and the only hope lies in surrender.

ch. 37^{1-10}.

Later, when the siege was raised owing to the intervention of Pharaoh Hophra, Zedekiah sent another message of inquiry to Jeremiah. The prophet foretold the failure of Pharaoh's expedition, and the capture of the city by the Chaldean army.

Re-capture of the Bond-servants, ch. 34^{8-22}.

At the same period Zedekiah, who had proclaimed liberty to the Hebrew bond-servants in accordance with the Law (34^{13}, and cf. Exod. 21^{2} Deut. 15^{12}), encouraged by the temporary removal of the danger, rescinded the order. Jeremiah condemned the king and the people for the violation of the oath, ratified by solemn ceremonial ($34^{18,19}$; cf. Gen. $15^{17,18}$), and pronounced sentence of punishment.

Jeremiah's Life during the Siege, ch. 37–39.

1. At first he was free (37^{4}).

2. When he tried to leave the city and go to Anathoth, he was captured, arrested on a charge of desertion, and flung into a dungeon (37^{11-15}).

3. After an interview, Zedekiah released him and placed him in the court of the guard, where he had access to the outside world (37^{16}–38^{3}).

4. The officers, accusing him of undermining the patriotism of the people, induced Zedekiah to fling him into an underground cistern, from which he was rescued by Ebed-melech an Ethiopian (cf. 39^{15-18}).

5. He was placed once more in the court of the guard, and during this period Zedekiah sent for him for the last time, and was again told by him that the only hope of safety lay in surrender. The king, weak and irresolute, did not take the prophet's advice and, ashamed of the interview, enjoined silence upon Jeremiah.

Purchase of the Field at Anathoth, ch. 32.

Just before the end of the siege, Jeremiah's cousin, Hanamel, sold him an ancestral field at Anathoth (upon which the Chaldeans may have been encamped at the moment). Jeremiah, then in the court of the guard (32^{1-5}), ratified the purchase with all due formality, and in spite of misgivings ($32^{16,24,25}$), took the incident as an omen that though captivity was imminent (32^{26-35}), return was certain (32^{36-44}).

Prophecies during Imprisonment, ch. 30 31 33.

This group of prophecies is marked by its extraordinary hopefulness. After announcing the end of the captivity, Jeremiah (?) delivers a series of oracles in almost all of which present disaster is followed by ultimate peace.

1. 30^{4-9}. Judah is in trouble, but her suffering at the hands of strangers shall be ended. A second David shall be king.

2. 30^{12-22}. Judah is sick and forsaken, but Jehovah will heal her diseases. Return and increase are promised, and a Prince of the house of David, who is to have the privilege of priestly access to God.

3. 30^{23}–31^{6}. A tempest of wrath gives place to a promise of the restoration of Israel to the Northern Kingdom, for Jehovah has found them in exile. 'Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love.'

4. 31^{7-14}. A triumph song of return. The wanderers and the weak shall be gathered (cf. Mic. 4^{6}). As a shepherd,

so will God lead them. 'My people shall be satisfied with my goodness, saith the Lord.' (Possibly of later date.)

5. 31^{15-26}. The prophet hears in imagination Rachel bewailing the exile of her children, and comforts her with the thought of their return, consequent upon their repentance. Judah as well as Ephraim shall share in the blessing of Jehovah. 'For I have satiated the weary soul, and every sorrowful soul have I replenished.'

6. 31^{27-30}. God will watch over the regenerate nation, and will restore it, and in the new age a deeper sense of individual responsibility and independence will be realized (cf. Ezek. 18).

The New Covenant, ch. 31^{31-34}.

Hitherto the Hebrew ideal of right conduct had consisted in the keeping of the Law. Though the Deuteronomic Code, which had superseded the Covenant Code, had aimed at changing the disposition of the people, its effect on conduct had been disappointing. (For the Covenant Code, see Exod. 20–24.) 'Jeremiah dares to proclaim that the old covenant is superseded by a new one, which more completely meets the wants of poor human nature. . . . God, of His free grace, will make the people what He would have them to be by first forgiving their sins in so absolute a manner that it shall seem as though He has forgotten them, and then as it were writing His requirements on the tablets of their hearts.'[1] Thus Israel in the future is to be ruled, not by a body of precepts, which while reforming conduct might leave character untouched, but by an inward principle which ensured a right motive for action. Cf. Matt. 23^{23} Luke 10^{25-37} Rom. $13^{8,9}$ Gal. 5^{14}. The nation shall be filled with a knowledge of Jehovah, moving it to obedience.

The section closes with promises of national permanence ($31^{35,36}$) and restoration (31^{38-40}).

Further Promises of Restoration.

7. 33^{1-13}. In spite of invasion, Jeremiah foresees a time of peace and stability, and return from captivity, when the nation has been cleansed and pardoned.

[1] Cheyne, *Jeremiah: His Life and Times*, pp. 156–7.

8. 33^{14-26}. A Messiah is promised, whose name 'The Lord our Righteousness' (23^{6}) shall be transferred to the cleansed city. (This passage belongs to a later date.)

Jeremiah's Life after the Fall of Jerusalem

Jeremiah's Life after the Fall of Jerusalem, ch. 40–44.

On the capture of the city Jeremiah was released from the court of the guard (39^{14}), and given the option of remaining in Judah with the lowest of the people or joining the flower of the nation in Babylon. He characteristically chose the former.

Gedaliah was appointed governor of Judah, but in spite of warnings received from Johanan he was murdered at Mizpah by Ishmael, a member of the royal family. After forcibly preventing Ishmael from carrying off to Ammon those whom he had taken captive at Mizpah, Johanan and the remnant of the people halted near Bethlehem and consulted Jeremiah as to the advisability of migrating to Egypt. (Note the existence of a Jewish colony at Yeb, dating, at the latest, from this period.) Jeremiah, in the name of Jehovah, urgently entreated them to remain in the land, declaring that if they migrated, destruction would certainly follow. Johanan and his followers refused to listen, and retreated to Egypt, taking both Jeremiah and Baruch with them.

Once settled there, the Hebrews gave themselves up to idolatrous practices, for which Jeremiah rebuked them, reminding them that for such doings destruction had already come upon them, and he declared that the remnant in Egypt would perish there. The people replied that they had been prosperous as long as they had worshipped the 'queen of heaven', and that it was to the neglect of her that their present sufferings were due. Finally, Jeremiah replied once more that God had punished them because of their idolatry, that Pharaoh Hophra would fall, and that all the men of Judah in the land of Egypt would be consumed, except a mere handful.

Summary of Jeremiah's Teaching

If martyrdom be rightly defined as self-sacrifice for a cause, it is easy to see why Jeremiah should be regarded as their typical martyr by a martyr-race. His was no eagle-flight of effort, no short quick race of honour, but the sacrifice of a lifetime consecrated to his people, his country, and his God. Loyal to himself, in spite of a temperament which was for ever playing him false; loyal to his people, who despised his ideals for them and ignored his love; loyal to his God, even when he felt himself forsaken, Jeremiah earned that ultimate blessing pronounced by his great successor—perhaps inspired by his example—upon those 'that wait upon their God': they 'shall walk and not faint' (Isa. 40^{31}).

The Martyrdom of his life.

It was caused by—

1. The antagonism and persecution of every class (1^{18}), priests and prophets (26^{8-19}), men of Anathoth (11^{21}), his own immediate kindred (12^{6}), his friends (20^{10}), the people at large (18^{18}).

2. The uncongeniality of his message (1^{6-10} 20^{7-13}).

3. The seeming conflict between loyalty to God and patriotism ($14^{11,12}$).

4. His isolation (15^{17} $16^{1,2,5,8}$).

His message alternates between despair and hope, despair as he looks upon Judah as it is, and hope as he looks forward to an ideal future.

His hopelessness is due to—

The Despair of his message.

1. His sense of man's sins: superficiality (2^{35} $3^{4,5}$ 6^{14}), ingratitude ($2^{11,13,21}$), ignorance (8^{7}), perversity (6^{28-30} 13^{23}), lack of truth ($9^{4,5}$ 17^{9}), which estrange men from God ($14^{8,9}$). Jeremiah perhaps realized this the more fully because of his own sense of failure (12^{5}).

2. His knowledge of the difficulty of repentance, which must be thorough ($4^{3,4}$), and sincere (17^{10}), and demands a process of refining (15^{19}).

3. His realization of the nation's inability to repent (10^{23} 13^{23}), so that he feels that even exile cannot purify them.

He pleads for a people who will not plead for themselves ($14^{7-9,19-22}$).

His apprehension of these truths was quickened by the deep sympathy of his nature (4^{19} 8^{18-22} 9^{1-2}).

His hopefulness is due to—

The Hope of his message.

1. His sense of the nearness of Jehovah (15^{16} 17^{17} 20^{11}).

2. His sense of God's love ($9^{23,24}$), and its power to draw men to repentance (29^{11}). Cf. Hosea.

3. His conviction of the destiny of the nation and her vocation in the world (16^{19} $30^{3,17-22}$).

Jeremiah's faith proved triumphant over his despair, and although his name has supplied a synonym for a lament, yet he was in reality hopeful. In a degenerate age, an age of social, political, and religious collapse, he had the courage to predict a glorious future—a restored city, a Messianic King, a purified people united to God by the New Covenant.

Note on the Compilation of the Book, and Passages of Doubtful Authorship

1. The first collection of Jeremiah's prophecies was contained in the roll dictated to Baruch (36^{4}, and for its contents see p. 53). This was destroyed by the king (36^{23}). 'It is impossible to say definitely how many of Jeremiah's prophecies were included in the roll of Jehoiakim's fifth year; but it will have included certainly ch. 1–10 (except 10^{1-16}), probably some part of 11–18, and at least a nucleus of 25; perhaps also parts of $46–49^{33}$.'[1]

2. It was re-written by Baruch in the following year at Jeremiah's dictation, and considerable additions and alterations were made (36^{32}).

3. Further chapters were then added containing the prophecies delivered up to the fall of Jerusalem. The title in 1^{1-3} indicates the growth of the book up to this point. The addition of *v.*[3] to *v.*[2] reveals the existence of stages in its composition before 586 B.C.

[1] Driver, *Book of the Prophet Jeremiah*, p. 47.

4. Later, possibly some years after Jeremiah's death, fragments of his prophetic utterances were gathered together and combined with a biographical narrative which includes the last years of Jeremiah's life. It is possible that some of the narrative passages were written by Baruch. It should, however, be noted that the actual compilation of the book was effected only by degrees, and it did not take its present form for many years. The fact that this process was not completed till quite a late date is proved by the difference between the Hebrew text and the Septuagint.

Owing to the complicated nature of the compilation of the book, it is impossible to treat its contents consecutively, or to assign dates with certainty to many passages. Not only are several passages omitted from the Septuagint, but other portions by both style and subject-matter are proved to belong to a later period. Among the more important passages of doubtful authorship are:—

1. 10^{1-16} (*vv.* $^{6-8}$ and ^{10} being absent from the Septuagint). Israel is bidden not to trust in or fear idols, which are the work of men's hands. It is Jehovah who has made heaven and earth.

2. 17^{19-27}. An exhortation to observe the sabbath, with blessings attached.

3. 31^{7-14}. See p. 59.

4. 31^{35-40}. See p. 60.

5. 32^{17-23}. Prayer to Jehovah. See p. 59.

6. 33^{14-26} (absent from the Septuagint). See p. 61.

7. 39^{4-13} (absent from the Septuagint). Cf. 2 Kings 25^{4-12}.

8. 52. Cf. 2 Kings 24, 25.

To these may be added the oracles against foreign nations, $46–51^{58}$.

Oracles against Foreign Nations

Chapters 46–49 probably come from the hands of later writers, who may have used genuine prophecies of Jeremiah as a basis for their work. Egypt is to be overthrown in spite

of all her boasting (46[2–12]), and afterwards invaded by Nebuchadrezzar (46[14–28]). Invasion and destruction also await Philistia (47), Moab (48), Ammon (49[1–6]), Edom (49[7–22]), Damascus (49[23–27]), and Kedar (49[28–33]). The prophecies seem to refer to the situation following the defeat of Egypt at Carchemish. The oracle against Moab is more elaborate than the others. A curse has fallen upon Moab, whose children flee the land (48[1–10]); its security is at an end, for ruin is at hand (48[11–19]); the mocker shall himself be mocked (48[20–28]), and his haughtiness humbled (48[29]); there is general lamentation (48[30–39]), for the doom of Moab is nigh, though in the far future there is hope (48[40–47]). The prophecy against Elam (49[34–39]) belongs to a later date.

Chapters 50–51[58], containing a prophecy against Babylon, almost certainly refer to *c.* 538 B.C., when Babylon fell before Cyrus. In this long oracle the prophet repeatedly calls upon the Medes and other northern nations to attack the city, the captor and oppressor of Israel, whose people will find refuge in Zion. He exults over the fate of Babylon, whose doom at the hands of Jehovah is absolute (51[30–44]).

OBADIAH

[CHIEF SOURCE: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

Date and Authorship.

Nothing is known of the writer of this book; the date of the prophecy is also uncertain: different scholars assign it to pre-exilic, exilic, and post-exilic times according to the interpretation put on the somewhat vague historical references which occur, *vv.* [10–21]. A similar prophecy is to be found in Jeremiah 49[7–22], and the probability seems to be that both these passages are based on an older prophecy incorporated in the early verses of Obadiah. Obadiah was probably a Jew taken into exile by Nebuchadrezzar, and would therefore be an eyewitness of the scenes which he describes (*vv.* [11–14]).

Contents of the Book.

1. Edom (Esau) is doomed, his country will be penetrated,

his allies will desert him, his wisdom will be of no avail (*vv.* [1–9]).

2. The cause of his downfall is the violence done to his 'brother Jacob' 'in the day of his disaster' (*vv.* [10–14]).

3. The 'day of the Lord' is near, when the position of Judah (Jacob) and the surrounding nations shall be reversed. Judah shall be restored, his enemies overthrown, and his territory enlarged (*vv.* [15–21]).

Contrast between Edom and Judah.

1. Both nations stood apart from others, and shared a common shrewdness, a certain cruelty, and a love of revenge.

2. Edom was material, and content with his wonderful territory, his worldly wisdom, his isolation. He was self-sufficing and self-content, and had no thought of the future, no sense of need of the divine.

3. Edom looked down on his Arab neighbour, whom he ruled, and across at his brother Jacob, from alliance with whom he could afford to hold aloof, and against whom 'he fretted his anger for ever'.

4. Edom's position on the great trade routes made him Judah's rival in commerce.

5. The fundamental difference between the two was one of character (Gen. 25^{27-34} Heb. 12^{16}). The one was worldly, scheming, dead to the unseen (cf. the Herods, Luke 13^{32}); the other, however faulty, never lost sight of his ideals.

Tone of the Book.

The tone of the book is antagonistic and vengeful, but it is no mere outbreak of selfish patriotism. It is the cry of a man ignored, wronged, misunderstood by one who never knew the same experiences; but its forecast of return and restoration could only be fulfilled when the vengeful spirit had been chastised and Israel had learnt that it was chosen not chiefly for conquest and self-assertion, but for service. Cf. Isa. 40–66.

B. THE EXILIC PROPHETS

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Exile

When Nineveh had fallen, and Egypt's intervention had been quickly followed by the overthrow of Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish, Babylon in the hands of Nebuchadrezzar became master of the western part of the Assyrian empire, including Palestine. The Rise of Babylon.

Nebuchadrezzar at first treated Judah with generosity, but the persistent disloyalty of her kings led to the great captivity of 597 B.C., followed by a further transportation of the people in 586 B.C. Deprived as she now was of the more responsible of her citizens, whether nobles or artisans, Judah was left in the hands of a rural population, numerous but not influential, and was subject to the incursions of her marauding neighbours. The Captivity. (1) Its effect on Judah.

Thus the hope of the future lay with the exiles, however hard their circumstances might seem (Jer. 24 Ezek. 11^{14-20}). Torn from their mountain home, banished to a land which was 'unclean' (Hos. 9^{3-5}), the captive Jews entered on a new era of history, and developed for good or evil that character which was to leave its indelible mark on the world through the influence of Judaism. It is true that large numbers of the exiles, losing that religious identity which alone was strong enough to secure their survival in a country with powerful counter-attractions, became absorbed in Babylonia. A loyal few, however, remained true to that monotheism which raised them immeasurably above their captors, and, inspired by Jeremiah, realized an individual and spiritual religion which was destined to give permanence to a people without a political existence but possessed of a missionary capacity and the great hope of a Return. (2) Its effect on the Exiles.

The actual number of the exiles was comparatively small, a mere fraction of the entire people, but they were placed Conditions of Exile.

at the centre of the world's life, and in contact with the Babylonians they came into touch with a national genius which, whether judged by its art, its literature, its science, or its commerce, was of no common order. Dominating the whole nation was the astounding personality of Nebuchadrezzar, whose power and versatility history and tradition have combined to extol (cf. Dan. 1–4). The Babylon which he had built has ever been regarded as one of the wonders of the world, with its gaudy palaces and temples, its hanging gardens and waterways, its gigantic walls, its splendour and its strength. Surrounded by such evidence of the power of his conqueror, and in the midst of successful materialism and triumphant idolatry (cf. Isa. 40^{19-20} 44^{9-20}), it must have been hard for the Jew to realize that Jehovah was still omnipotent (Ezek. 1 Isa. 40–48 *passim*). Socially, the Jews had wide opportunities. It is true that, in company with other captive nations, they were employed on the projects of their conquerors; but whether settled in Babylon or on the surrounding Mesopotamian plain, they could still live in their own houses (Jer. 29^{5-7}) under the control of their 'elders' (Ezek. 8^{1} 14^{1}). Although the captives of 586 B.C. fared worse than the earlier exiles, the people as a whole were not ill-used, but political life had ceased with the loss of city and king.

Social Opportunities.

In religion, their opportunities were seemingly curtailed, for sacrifice was impossible in an alien land; but they could still meet for prayer and purification, could keep the Sabbath and the fasts, and practise a personal piety. But the most startling development of the exile is that of the sacred literature. It is to this period that we owe the editing of the historic books ('the Later Prophets'); much of the codification of the Law; and a large part of that poetry by which the nation, through its individual members, gave vent to its varied experiences of pain or joy, in those hymns of prayer and praise which make the Hebrew Psalms the supreme expression of religious life. Above all, it is to the exile that we must look for the highest flights of prophecy itself.

Religious Opportunities.

The exile lasted for two generations, during the reigns of Duration of the Exile.

Nebuchadrezzar . .	604
Evil Merodach . .	561
Nereglissar . .	559
Nabunahid or Nabonidos	554

Under this king the Jews suffered heavily; he was conquered by Cyrus in 538 B. C.

EZEKIEL

[CHIEF SOURCES: *Ezekiel* (Cambridge Bible Series), A. B. Davidson. *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, Driver.]

Ezekiel was the son of Buzi; he was a prophet, priest, and pastor. Born probably in Josiah's days, he may have been influenced by those who brought about the reformation of 621 B. C. Probably he belonged to the family of Zadok. Ezekiel.

The character of his teaching leaves no room to doubt the influence which Jeremiah had upon him. Both prophets accept a difficult mission with enthusiasm (Jer. 1^{9} 15^{16} Ezek. 2^{8} 3^{3}), and feel a kind of 'sympathy with Jehovah in his alienation from the people'[1] (Jer. 15^{17} Ezek. 3^{14}). Both dare to intercede for the people, though 'the time for intercession is gone by'[2] (Jer. 15^{1} Ezek. 9^{8} 11^{13}). Ezekiel takes the same view as Jeremiah of the generation to which they are sent: the people are obstinate and will not hear (Jer. 1^{19} Ezek. $2^{4,6}$); there is not a man worthy of the name to be found (Jer. 5^{1} Ezek. 22^{30}); Judah has not only outdone Samaria in guilt (Jer. 3^{11}), but has been more obstinate than the heathen (Jer. 2^{11} Ezek. 5^{6}); the city is full of bloodshed and sin (Jer. $7^{5-10,31}$ 22^{1-5} Ezek. 7^{23} 9^{9}); her foreign alliances (Jer. 4^{30}) and idolatry (Jer. 7^{18} 11^{13} 16^{11} 19^{13} Ezek. 8) are sin against GOD. Though Jeremiah admits the faithfulness of wilderness days (Jer. 2^{2}), Ezekiel sees no redeeming feature in Israel's past (Ezek. $20^{5,7,8,24}$). Like Jeremiah he is in antagonism to the nation, and in his (1) Influence of Jeremiah.

[1] Davidson, *Ezekiel* (Cambridge Bible), p. xxxiv.
[2] ibid., p. xxxv.

isolation relies on the help of God to meet opposition (Jer. $1^{8,17,18}$ Ezek. $3^{8,9}$); hope, if there be any, lies with the part of the nation in captivity (Jer. 24 Ezek. 11^{17-21} 17^{22-24}), but it is only individuals who can be rescued (Jer. $31^{33,34}$ Ezek. 18). Both prophets foretell the downfall of city and nation, both fix their hopes on a Messianic future, an ideal age; but when all has been said it must be remembered that whilst Jeremiah's sphere is the doomed city, his prominent message that of the fall of the Temple, Ezekiel is essentially the prophet of the exile; his message concerns the new age, in which a new temple and a pure ritual shall take the place of what has been destroyed. Jeremiah's personality pervades his book; he is a man of intense feeling, strong in action; of Ezekiel we know little, but he seems to have carried on his work amid calm and leisure, to have been a scholar and a recluse.

(2) His Surroundings.

Ezekiel shared the exile of Jehoiachin, 597 B.C., and was settled on the banks of the Chebar, probably a stream or canal in Babylonia. Here for twenty-two years, 592–570 B.C., he carried out his mission. He was evidently out of sympathy with his fellow-captives, the barriers between them were stronger than could have been raised by a foreign language ($2^{3,4}$ $3^{5,7}$); their tone was optimistic or despairing, never faithful, as is seen by their proverbs (12^{22}; cf. 12^{27} $18^{2,25}$ 20^{49} 33^{10} 37^{11}).

(3) Facts of his Life recorded.

Fact and symbol are so blended in the book that it is difficult to determine the circumstances of the prophet's life [e.g. when he mentions dumbness (3^{26} 24^{27}), lying on either side (4^{4-17}), he is probably using imaginative symbols], but he appears to have been married (24^{15-24}); he had a house, where the elders visited him (3^{24} 8^{1}); his character commanded respect, his discourses were popular (33^{30-32}). Tradition says that he met his death at the hand of a prince of the nation whom he had reproved for idolatry.

(4) Ezekiel as Pastor.

Ezekiel calls himself a 'watchman'. His sense of individual responsibility led him to care for the individual (3^{16-21} 18

33^{1-20}). The kingdom being destroyed, there was only the individual left. For a time the incredulity of the people silenced his public teaching, and he only instructed those who visited him in his own house, till the fulfilment of his great prediction—the fall of the City—made them attend to his words (3^{24-26}; cf. 24^{25-27} 33^{21-22}).

(5) As Prophet.

Ezekiel's position was different from that of any of his predecessors; he addressed himself directly to the captives in Tel-abib, but he never lost sight of the Israel of the dispersion, and he was able to speak to the absent, as if they had been his present audience. Though debarred from politics, his interests were large (cf. ch. 1 and 27), and his mind found its solace in creations of imagination which became more real to him than the facts of history. The subject-matter of his book is not strikingly original, but in his hands the truths of prophecy become clearer and more systematized.

(6) As Priest.

To Ezekiel, as priest, we owe the theory developed in chapters 40–48. Jehovah dwells in a sanctuary in the midst of His people, and the idea of holiness is applied to every part of the national life of the purified people, who are practically a church (i.e. a community bound together by spiritual ties).

(7) The Visionary.

Ezekiel was a visionary, and his prophecies are often expressed in the form of:—

(1) Symbolic figures—
- (*a*) The Jewish kings likened to lion cubs (19^{1-9}).
- (*b*) Israel, a spreading vine, &c. (19^{10-14}).
- (*c*) Tyre, a gallant ship wrecked (27).

(2) Symbolic actions (often not to be taken literally)—
- (*a*) Cutting his hair, &c. (5).
- (*b*) Joining two sticks, &c. (37^{15-28}).
- (*c*) Refraining from mourning (24^{15-24}).

3. Visions—
- (*a*) The vision of the Chariot of God and One who had 'a likeness as the appearance of a man' (1).
- (*b*) The dry bones which lived (37^{1-14}).

The Book.

The arrangement of Ezekiel is simpler than that of any other of the great prophetic books. For the most part the chapters are in chronological order. There is a lapse of two years between 24 and 33, and here the prophecies addressed to foreign nations are inserted, and a lapse of thirteen years between 39 and 40, while 29^{17-21} is a late insertion dated 570 B.C. Probably the book was written at a late period in Ezekiel's life, and its present form suggests careful planning and arrangement, although, in the main, the prophecies seem to have been spoken (20^{49} $33^{31,32}$). The style is elaborate and polished, seldom poetic (for exceptions see 19 $26^{17,18}$ 32^{17-32} also 7^{5-7} 21^{9-17}), often monotonous, and the language redundant.

Divisions of the Book.

The book may be divided into two equal parts of twenty-four chapters each[1]:—

Part I. 1–24 (592–588 B.C.), dealing with the destruction of the city and nation—a survey of the times, with only a few gleams of hope (11^{16-20} 17^{22-24} 21^{27}).

Part II. 25–48, dealing with the reconstitution of the people and their eternal peace. It may be subdivided:—

(*a*) 25–32 (usually dated *c.* 586 B.C.). Prophecies addressed to foreign nations, whose overthrow prepares the way for the restoration of God's people.

(*b*) 33–39 (586–585 B.C.). Prophecies of hope, describing the reconstitution of the people.

(*c*) 40–48 (572 B.C.). Prophecies describing the final glory and peace of the people of the Lord.

Part I (chapters 1–24)
City and Nation Doomed

Section 1. Ezekiel's inaugural Vision, ch. $1–3^{21}$.

Chapter 1 describes how Ezekiel saw the chariot of God emerge from flashing fire-clouds. He saw the living creatures with four faces, the wheels full of eyes, with rims to every point of the compass, and the firmament and throne, above which was 'a likeness as the appearance of a man', and he

[1] Cf. Davidson, *Ezekiel* (Cambridge Bible), pp. x–xvii.

realized the facts needed by the outcast captive for support and comfort, viz. 'the omnipotence, the omnipresence, the omniscience' of God.

His initiation into his Mission.

2^{1}–3^{21}. Having seen the vision of God, Ezekiel is given his commission; the people will be rebellious, but he must speak (2^{1-7}); he is made to eat the roll, symbolic of the communication of God's word to him (2^{8}–3^{3}); thus prepared, he is to speak to the house of Israel, who will hear, but will not heed his word (3^{4-9}); he is especially sent to the captives at Tel-abib; he is to be a 'watchman' responsible for individual souls (3^{16-21}).

Section 2. Fate of City and Nation, ch. 3^{22}–7^{27}.

3^{22-27}. This section of the book begins with a preface describing how, owing to the obstinacy of the people, Ezekiel has to abandon his public ministry, and confine himself to teaching in his own house (3^{22-27}).

4 5. The prophet is bidden to portray by means of a tile the siege of Jerusalem (4^{1-3}), and then by lying first on one side and then on the other to symbolize the captivity of Israel and Judah (4^{4-8}); by eating bread by weight and drinking water by measure he is to suggest the privations of the siege (4^{9-17}). By cutting off his hair and dividing it into three parts he is to indicate the fate of the inhabitants of Jerusalem at the time of the siege and afterwards (5^{1-4}); this fate is further illustrated in 5^{5-17}.

6. A prophecy is addressed to the land of Israel and especially to the mountains, which have been the seat of her worst idolatries. Idols and worshippers are alike doomed. The remnant that escapes shall at last recognize the hand of Jehovah in all that has happened.

7. 'The end' is foretold in a dirge over the downfall of Judah ($7^{5-7,10-12}$ are in lyric strain). Land (7^{1-4}) and people (7^{5-9}) are doomed; the overthrow is universal (7^{10-13}). Defence is useless, all are weak and despairing, none can avert the coming doom (7^{14-27}).

Section 3 Sin of Jerusalem

8. The idolatries practised in the precincts of the Temple are described: the 'image of jealousy' in the outer court, the

and the Divine vengeance, ch. 8–11.

Egyptian idolatry practised secretly by the elders, the Phoenician worship of Tammuz, the eastern worship of the sun.

9. The inhabitants of the city are destroyed by the six men with their slaughter weapons; only those whose foreheads have been marked by the 'man clothed in linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side', can survive. Jehovah Himself presides over the work of destruction (9^3).

10. Fire from between the Cherubim is scattered over the guilty city. Cf. ch. 1.

11. The folly of the national policy of resistance to Nebuchadrezzar is exposed under the simile of the cauldron; Jerusalem shall not be able to protect her people; as an omen of evil one of the leaders drops down dead. Then when the prophet intercedes he is comforted; the exiles, despised as they are by the men of Jerusalem, shall return; the grace of God shall break the stubborn hearts of the people, and turn them back to God. But Jerusalem is no longer a fit abode for Jehovah, and so the Cherubim take their flight from the doomed city.

[Notes on 10 and 11. (1) The difference between 1^{10} and 10^{14} is difficult to explain, but it is not to be supposed that Ezekiel has altered his idea of the Cherubim.

(2) The movements of the Cherubim are difficult to follow:

9^3. Jehovah having left the throne borne by the Cherubim stands at the entrance of the Temple to superintend the work of slaughter.

10^{1-3}. Jehovah reappears upon His throne and commands burning coals to be scattered over the city.

10^{4-17}. He leaves the throne and stands by the Temple while the burning coals are scattered.

10^{18-22}. Then He resumes His seat before taking His final departure. He pauses at the eastern gate of the Lord's House.

11^{22-25}. The Cherubim take their final flight.]

12^{1-20}. The blindness of the people to the coming danger necessitates further warning.

Section 4a. The Fall of Jerusalem, the necessary result of the people's sin, ch. 12–19.

By symbolic actions Ezekiel forecasts the exile of king and people, and suggests the privations which they will have to endure.

(*a*) He prepares his stuff for removing, &c. (12[1–16]).

(*b*) He eats his bread with quaking, &c. (12[17–20]).

12[21–13]. It is useless for the people to shelter themselves behind the hope that the prophet's words of evil are only destined to fulfilment in the remote future, or will prove to be altogether visionary, for the time is at hand (12[21–28]). The false prophets, who by their oracles which remained unfulfilled have fostered these false hopes, will be exposed. False in policy, because they fail to recognize the true destiny of the nation; false in morals, because they are without that lofty standard which would enable them to recognize destruction as the logical outcome of sin; destitute of experience of spiritual communion with God, and therefore unable to interpret his ways; these prophets undermine the tottering fabric of national existence (13[4]). By their flattery they encourage the people in their suicidal resolution to revolt. (Cf. Jer. 28–29.) Deceivers of others, they are themselves self-deceived (13[6,7]), and are destined to bring disaster on the country, and on themselves irreparable ruin (13[8–16]). The chapter closes with a denunciation of the false prophetesses who, by their sorceries, 'have grieved the heart of the righteous . . . and strengthened the hands of the wicked' (13[17–23]).

14. Like the other great prophets Ezekiel traces the existence of false prophets to the wickedness of the people; they are sent by God (14[9]) as a punishment for the national idolatry. The only message the true prophet has for such a people is 'Return ye, and turn yourselves from your idols'. The chapter closes (14[12–23]) with a warning that the presence of the righteous in an evil community cannot save it—'they shall deliver but their own souls by their righteousness'. If any remnant escape from Jerusalem, it is only that by the sight of their wickedness the exiles may learn to realize the necessity for the overthrow of Zion.

15 17. These chapters contain allegories showing from different standpoints the nation's ripeness for judgement:—

1. Israel is compared to a charred vine branch which is utterly useless, for it has never borne fruit. Having missed its spiritual vocation, what use is Israel, in its diminished state, as a political power?

2. The 'riddle' of the great eagles is used to expose the perfidy and folly of Zedekiah, who richly deserves his miserable fate. In place of the fallen monarchy, Jehovah Himself shall found a Messianic Kingdom, which shall be of universal influence.

18. In this chapter the prophet's purpose seems to be to rouse the people from their gloomy despair, caused by a feeling (1) that they were suffering for the sins of their forefathers, (2) that they were entangled in the mesh of their own past failure. He preaches the doctrine of moral freedom and individual independence, and shows that each man stands in an immediate spiritual relationship to God, and can therefore break with his own past, and be free from hereditary guilt. He can 'live' or 'die', but God has 'no pleasure in the death of him that dieth'. (Ch. 18 stands in close connexion with the preceding Messianic prophecy. Ezekiel is contemplating an ideal age, in which conditions of life will more perfectly correspond with an ideal state.)

19. A lament is made for the kings Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, who are likened:

1. To lion whelps, whose pathetic fate is described (19^{9}).

2. To shoots, or rods of a flourishing vine tree, broken and destroyed; while the vine is uprooted and planted in an alien soil, where fire coming out of the last remaining rod (Zedekiah) causes destruction (19^{10-14}).

Section 4b. The Fall of Jerusalem necessitated by Jehovah's regard for the honour of His Name, ch. 20–24.

20^{1-44}. A summary of the history of Israel is given, showing their persistent unfaithfulness in Egypt (20^{1-10}), in the wilderness (20^{11-26}), and in Canaan (20^{27-29}), so that only Jehovah's regard for the honour of His Name has preserved them. The present generation are as faithless as the Israelites of old,

but in spite of their obstinate idolatry God will assert His power over them, try them once more in 'the wilderness of the peoples', so that a purified remnant will return and serve Him in the mountains of Israel (20[30-40]). Israel repentant shall loathe its past sin, while all shall recognize that Jehovah is God, and that He has been working throughout for the honour of His Name (20[41-44]).

20[45]–21. Under the figure of a forest fire kindled in the south, Ezekiel foretells the destruction of Judah; Jehovah's sword is drawn against Jerusalem. In 'the Song of the Sword' (21[9-17]), he describes the preparation of the sword, the purpose for which it is sharpened, its action—leaping and flashing hither and thither—and the final slaughter by which the wrath of Jehovah is assuaged.

The instrument by which the work is done is Nebuchadrezzar; after hesitation at the parting of the ways, the augury points towards Jerusalem, city and king are doomed (21[18-27]). Though for the moment Ammon seems safe, its fate is in reality only postponed, and it must return the sword into its sheath, for it will be unable to stand against the foe.

22. Ezekiel draws a hideous picture of the sin of Jerusalem: her crimes are unspeakable, Israel is 'dross', every class is corrupt (22[17-31]).

24. (B.C. 588, the tenth day of the tenth month.) This chapter marks the close of Ezekiel's first period. His final oracle concerning the fate of Jerusalem is spoken on the very day on which the city was invested by the Chaldeans. The figure of the cauldron (cf. 11[1-13]) is revived; he tells how it is set on the fire to boil furiously, and the flesh is pulled out piecemeal (symbolizing siege and dispersion); at last, because of the open sin of the city, the cauldron is set empty on the coals, that the 'rust' and filth may be burned out of it (24[1-14]). The unutterable grief of the people when the fact of the fall of Jerusalem is brought home to them is prefigured by Ezekiel, who abstains from mourning on the death of his

wife (24^{15-24}). Only when the news of the fall of Jerusalem shall prove the truth of his prophecy will the people realize that Ezekiel is something more than a mere 'speaker in parables', and so the need for silence will pass away (24^{25-27}).

Part II

Prophecies of the Reconstruction of the Nation and its Eternal Peace

A. Prophecies on Foreign Nations, ch. 25–32.

In this section of the book, Ezekiel delivers oracles against seven of the neighbouring nations. Jehovah's Name has been 'profaned' among the nations, because they have seen in His punishment of Israel a sign of His apparent failure to save His 'chosen'. Jehovah must now assert the honour of His Name; this He will accomplish by the overthrow of the nations. (See 'Summary of Ezekiel's Teaching', p. 84.)

(1) Purpose of their overthrow.

(2) Cause of their overthrow.

Punishment overtakes the nations:—

1. Because (in the case of the smaller countries chiefly) they have wrought mischief against the chosen people by their malice (25^{3}), jealousy (25^{8}), hatred ($25^{12,15}$), selfishness (26^{2}), and evil influence ($29^{6,7,16}$).

2. Because (in the case of the larger nations) they have shown themselves arrogant and proud (28^{2} 29^{3}).

The judgement of the heathen prepares the way for the restoration of Israel, by removing those influences which have hitherto caused her to err; but with regard to the older and more stable nations at least, the prophet feels regret rather than exultation.

The smaller Nations.

25. Ammon, Moab, Edom, and Philistia are doomed on account of their enmity towards the chosen people, and their triumph at the fall of Judah.

The greater Nations.

$26–28^{19}$. Tyre is to be destroyed because of her selfishness and pride.

(a) 26. Because she rejoices at the fate of Jerusalem, which has proved an obstacle to her trade, Tyre is doomed to be overthrown by Nebuchadrezzar.

(*b*) 27. A splendid ship (Tyre) is guided by her pilots into danger, and 'the east wind breaks her in the heart of the seas' to the amazement of all sea-goers, who sing a lament (27^{32} ff.) over the fallen mistress of the seas.

(*c*) 28^{1-19}. Because of his self-justification and his pride, the prince of Tyre must be humbled by the 'terrible of the nations'—the Chaldeans (28^{1-10}). Though once he seemed a brilliant creature, perfect in beauty, living in the paradise of God, on account of his pride he is expelled (28^{11-19}).

28^{20-26}. Sidon is threatened with siege. At last Israel shall dwell securely, released from all her enemies, and all shall recognize Jehovah as God.

29–32. Six prophecies against Egypt. The great world-power is doomed. Because of its pride and the evil influence it has had upon Israel, it is to fall by the hand of Nebuchadrezzar. All the nations are involved in its downfall, and even Nature stands aghast.

(*a*) 29^{1-16}. The great dragon of the river is dragged up by the hook of Jehovah and cast upon the land, with all the fish sticking to its sides. Egypt is overthrown and depopulated, but after forty years it is restored to a position of secondary importance. 29^{17-21}. A later addition. Egypt is promised to Nebuchadrezzar as a reward for his prolonged exertions against Tyre.

(*b*) 30^{1-19}. In 'the day of the Lord' Egypt, with all its allies, is to be overthrown.

(*c*) 30^{20-26}. Pharaoh Hophra is threatened with further disaster.

(*d*) 31. A great cedar of mighty stature, which gives protection to bird and beast, is cut down by 'the mighty one of the nations'. It lies an example of ruined pride and unwarrantable aspirations. All nature shudders at its fall, the waters are stayed, and there is even commotion in Sheol when it descends there.

(*e*) 32^{1-16}. A prophecy similar to ch. 29.

32^{17-32}. These prophecies are followed by a strange passage. It is a dirge chanted over Pharaoh and 'the multitude of Egypt', who have gone down into Sheol, 'uncircumcised, slain by the sword'; there they join the various peoples who have once caused violence and terror on the earth; these still have a shadowy existence, their state being a judgement from Jehovah on their character.

B. Prophecies of the Restoration of Israel, ch. 33–39.

33. When the news of the fall of Jerusalem reached Babylon, Ezekiel's silence came to an end ($33^{21,22}$); in accordance with his duty as 'watchman' (33^{1-9}), he once more taught the people, and they listened to him with at least a half-awakened interest (33^{30-33}). His duty is to awaken the individual to a sense of his responsibility and personal freedom, and to bid him throw off despair, for God desires that men should live. Each may enter the ideal kingdom of the future, the only condition of entrance being repentance (33^{10-20}); and those left behind in the land will find their hopes false, and that they have forfeited their inheritance by idolatry (33^{23-29}).

Conditions of Entering the Kingdom.

The Ideal King.

34. Ezekiel tells of the ruin of the land by the kings, the false shepherds who, to feed themselves, have destroyed the sheep. The prophet describes how the Lord Himself will gather the flock (cf. Hosea and Jer. 23^{1-4}). He will give them a good shepherd who shall feed them in fair pastures, and keep them in perpetual peace; they shall no more be afraid of the heathen without or scarcity within, and shall recognize Jehovah as God.

The Restored Land.

$35-36^{15}$. The land itself shall be rescued from the alien nations who have seized upon Jehovah's mountain, while His people are in exile. Edom shall become a desolation for ever, while Israel shall be made productive, so that men shall know that Jehovah is God.

The Principle that guides History.

36^{16-38}. This passage throws light on the nature and purpose of Jehovah's dealings with His people. Israel's sin necessitated punishment; this led to captivity, which meant the hiding of Jehovah's true character from the nations, who

thought that, as a tribal deity, He had failed to defend His own. When Israel, purified and purged, is brought back to its own land, and surrounded by every sign of Jehovah's goodness, the people shall come to hate their past sin and to realize their own unworthiness; while the nations shall know, not only the power, but the righteousness of God. His Name, which was 'profaned' by the sin of His chosen people, is now sanctified by their redemption. Thus throughout history Jehovah is working for the honour of His Name.

The Revived Nation.

37. The nation lies dead, its bones very dry; the prophet himself doubts the possibility of the revival of a nation defunct; but he prophesies, as bidden, and the change begins. The bones rush together, the flesh creeps up, and then the wind—breath, spirit—breathes on them and the dead live (37^{1-14}). The Lord's people, Ephraim and Judah, shall be united, restored to their own land, and David His servant shall reign over them in peace for evermore. Jehovah's tabernacle shall be with them, and the nations shall acknowledge His presence in Israel (37^{15-28}).

The Expansion of Jehovah's Kingdom.

$38-39^{24}$. In the far future the remote nations ('Gog and all his multitude'), who know not Jehovah, shall come up from the uttermost parts of the earth, drawn by the hope of plunder. They shall be destroyed by supernatural powers, and the land cleansed from every vestige of their presence, while Israel shall remain at peace. Thus all the world shall come to recognize the sovereignty of Jehovah, His righteousness and His care for His people.

The Restoration of Israel.

39^{25-29}. Israel, restored to its own land, becomes in truth the people of God, realizing the meaning of all He has done for them and assured that He will never forsake them. 'Neither will I hide my face any more from them: for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.'

C. Vision of the Ideal Future.

Ezekiel in these chapters describes a ceremonial system which shall enable the people to worship God aright, and shall also serve to perpetuate the condition of regeneration to

The Theocracy, ch. 40–48.

which they have attained. The centre of the system is the restored Temple, which is Jehovah's residence. 'His re-entry into the Temple' from which, nearly nineteen years before, Ezekiel had witnessed His departure (43^{1-12}; cf. 10^{19}), 'and His abiding presence there, are the two thoughts in which ch. 40–48 culminate (43^{1-9} 48^{35}).'[1] The aim of the system is to maintain the holiness of Temple and people. The Temple and all its belongings are carefully isolated and guarded from profanation; outside the mass of buildings lies a free space; inside the exterior wall there is first an outer, and then an inner court; into the latter no layman may pass. Inside the inner court stand altar and Temple. The Temple has three parts—Porch, Holy Place, and an innermost Sanctuary, where abides the Presence of God. Only the priests may enter the buildings or serve at the altar; only the Levites may touch the sacrifices. The Temple area is bounded on the north and south by the lands of the Levites and the City, and guarded east and west by those of the Prince. Further to the north lie the portions of seven tribes, and to the south the portions of five.

Contents of ch. 40–48. (1) The Temple Buildings.

40–43. The Temple, with its courts, gates, and annexed buildings is described, and the dimensions of the whole are given ($40-42$). Jehovah enters the Temple (43^{1-12}). The altar and the rites to be observed at its consecration are described (43^{13-27}).

(2) The Temple Ordinances.

44–46. The east gate, by which Jehovah entered, is kept shut (44^{1-3}). Only priests of the house of Zadok may perform priestly functions, the more menial offices devolving upon the Levites (44^{4-16}). Further directions about the priests and their duties are given (44^{17-31}). The 'oblation' or sacred territory is set apart (45^{1-8}). Arrangements are made for the necessary sacrifices to be offered by the prince, who stands as representative of the people in civil and religious matters (45^{9-17}). The special and daily services and the sacrifices to be offered by the prince are regulated (45^{18}–46).

[1] Driver, *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, p. 292.

47–48. The Land is fertilized by a stream issuing from the Sanctuary (47^{1-12}). Its boundaries are named and its division among the tribes is appointed. Arrangements are made for the 'oblation', and the dimensions of the city are given, and its gates enumerated. (3) The Temple and the Land.

In these chapters Ezekiel pictures Jehovah as 'a person dwelling among his people in a house, a holy being or nature, sensitive to every uncleanness in all that is near him, and requiring its removal by lustration and atonement'.[1] Israel after its long discipline is regarded as redeemed, and the Messianic Kingdom is realized, the people are washed and a new heart and a new spirit given them: they know that Jehovah is God. A new Temple and a pure worship are established. Jehovah dwells among them; a life-giving stream flows from His presence (47^{1-12}) and brings with it freshness and fertility. It is hard for us to reconcile the supernatural elements in the picture (40^{1-4} 47^{1-12}) with the natural (45^{1-7} $46^{16-18,19-24}$). The presence of the two can only be explained in the light of the beliefs of those days:— The Character of the Vision.

1. They looked for the fulfilment of their ideals in this world, without hope for the future (32^{17-32}; cf. Isa. 38^{10-20}).
2. They believed that true perfection could only be realized by Jehovah's presence among His people, when 'the tabernacle of God was with men'. These ideas are to us incompatible, but we can see the beauty of Ezekiel's hope, and something of his courage as he realizes in far-off Babylon this picture of salvation—his people saved, and the rule of holiness established in a New Jerusalem, which has for its name 'The Lord is there' (48^{35}).

There are several codes of law with which it is interesting to compare that of Ezekiel, incorporated in ch. 40–48. Connexion between Ezekiel's Code and other Codes of Law.

[1] Davidson, *Ezekiel*, p. liv.

1. The 'Covenant Code', Exod. 20^{24}–23, with which Exod. 34^{10-28} may be classed.

2. Deuteronomy.

3. The Priestly Code, Exod. 25–31 35–40, the whole of Leviticus, and a large part of Numbers. Ezekiel's legislation seems to present a transition between Deuteronomy and the Priestly Code, and to bear a very close resemblance to the Law of Holiness (Lev. 17–26), so that these nine chapters of his book hold an important place in the history of the Law.

Summary of Ezekiel's Teaching

(1) The Omnipotence and Holiness of God.

'*And they shall know that I am Jehovah.*'

'*I wrought for my name's sake that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations.*'

These sentences seem to suggest the most fundamental thoughts in Ezekiel's book—the omnipotence and holiness of Jehovah and His purpose in history. To Ezekiel history is a revelation of God's Name or character to men (20^{41} 28^{25} 36^{23} 39^{27}). To reveal Himself to the world, God omnipotent became known as the God of Israel, that through the chosen people He might make Himself known to men. The sin of Israel thwarted His purposes, and His name was 'profaned'; therefore for His righteousness' sake He cast out His people from His land. The nations looked on in their pride, and scoffed; for this they were overthrown, that they might learn to know God's power and righteousness. But when Israel, chastened, cleansed and forgiven, is once more brought back into Jehovah's favour, both the chosen people and the heathen will have a deeper and truer knowledge of the character of God. To Ezekiel himself the sense of the omnipotence, omniscience and omnipresence of God was ever present (cf. 1 3^{23} 8^{4} 9^{3} $10^{4,18,19}$ $11^{22,23}$ 43^{2-7} 44^{4}), and in contrast with these attributes of God, note the title by which Jehovah addresses him, i.e. 'son of man' (*mortal*), suggestive of the prophet's insignificance.[1]

[1] Cf. Davidson, *Ezekiel*, pp. xli–xliii.

Ezekiel's message as a watchman, charged with the care of individual souls, is one of hope. In answer to the cries of despair of the people (18^2 $33^{10,17}$), he teaches that every man stands in an individual relation to God, and is not involved in the sins of his forefathers, nor in those of his own past. (2) The Religion of the Individual.

This individual relation must be spiritual. To Ezekiel repentance is a spiritual process, as it was to Hosea. In 6^9 he speaks of it as the result of punishment, but later his point of view seems to change, and he shows God's mercy drawing the people to Him. God Himself, of His own free grace, forgives them and changes their hard hearts by the power of His Spirit (11^{19}), so that they learn to loathe their own past and recognize His goodness (36^{23-31} 39^{25-29}; cf. 37^{1-14}). (3) The Spirituality of Religion.

At first sight Ezekiel's attitude towards the heathen seems to be exclusively threatening. Contrast, however, 17^{22-24}, where the cedar (the Davidic house) is planted on the top of the mountains to be a covering 'to fowl of every wing'. (4) The Missionary Spirit.

Ezekiel shares with the other great prophets the hope of a return. Not only does he describe the restoration of the people in ch. 33–39, but in ch. 40–48 he pictures the perfect and restored Israel with God dwelling in their midst. His ideas seem to have guided those who organized the return in their ritual and arrangements; but his influence cannot be limited to the immediate future. His visions of the 'New Jerusalem' and the 'River of Life', amplified in the Book of the Revelation (Rev. 21 22), have supplied Christian literature with two of its permanent conceptions. (5) The Hope of Return.

ISAIAH (chapters 40–66)

[Chief Sources: *Isaiah*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith. *Isaiah*, vol. ii, in Century Bible, Whitehouse. *Isaiah*, vol. ii, in Cambridge Bible Series, Skinner.]

Most eminent scholars are agreed that the last twenty-seven chapters of the so-called 'Book of Isaiah' were not written by Isaiah the son of Amoz. Had not tradition grouped Date and authorship.

these chapters with the genuine writings of Isaiah, it seems safe to say that their authorship would have been assigned without question to exilic or post-exilic prophets.

Question of the unity of the book, ch. 40–66.

In all probability ch. 40–48 are from one hand, and it is very possible that 49–55 also owe their origin mainly to the same author, with the exception of four passages, 42^{1-4} 49^{1-6} 50^{4-9} 52^{13}–53, which some authorities hold on grounds of style to be the work of an earlier prophet, and to have been incorporated by 'Deutero-Isaiah' with the remainder of 40–55.

Not only does their style forbid us to assign 56–66 to this author, but they reflect a very different historical situation. It is very possible that, as Cheyne suggests, they form a collection of ten prophecies from varying hands.

Title of the book.

But it is not difficult to see why both of these sections were attached to the genuine prophecies of Isaiah, who told of the inviolability of Zion, the remnant and the return. These later chapters witness to the fulfilment of his hopes of salvation.

Personality of the author or authors.

As in the case of the greatest of our own dramatists, the personality of the writer—or writers—is concealed. But the treatment of the vast truths the prophecy contains, the handling of the historical and religious questions raised by the unique experiences of the 'chosen people', the insight shown into the meaning of sin, suffering, and service, indicate that the work of perhaps the greatest of the Hebrew prophets is before us.

Divisions of the book.

For purposes of explanation the book will be divided, in agreement with many modern scholars, as follows:—

I. (*a*) 40–48, taken as the work of one author, 'Deutero-Isaiah,' with the exception of the pessimistic glosses of chapter 48.

(*b*) The 'Servant' passages from ch. 40–55, consisting of four 'songs', possibly the work of an earlier prophet—42^{1-4} 49^{1-6} 50^{4-9} 52^{13}–53—incorporated in the work of Deutero-Isaiah.

(*c*) 49–55, taken as the work of Deutero-Isaiah, but probably written later than ch. 40–48.

II. 56–66, taken as the work of a later author or authors.

DEUTERO-ISAIAH (chapters 40–55)

The date Exilic. Proofs from (1) Historical allusions.

(*a*) Israel is in exile in Babylon, undergoing punishment for her sins. Note the similes: Zion is a bereaved mother (49^{21}), a prostrate mourner (52^{2}), a wife forsaken (54^{6}), a widow (54^{4}), her children sold into slavery (50^{1}). Throughout the prophecy the indications of a near return are frequent (e.g. 40^{2} ff. 45^{13}).

(*b*) The fall of Babylon is at hand (43^{14} 47 48^{14}).

(*c*) Deliverance is near, Cyrus has already begun, but not finished, his career of conquest (41^{2} and cf. 41^{25} 44^{28}–45^{6} 45^{13}). This would suggest that ch. 40–48 must have been written between the years 555 and 538 B.C. (see historic note on Cyrus, pp. 91–5). Moreover the success Cyrus has already gained is treated as a proof of the truth of former prophecies of deliverance in the argument of ch. 40–48.

(2) Teaching of the book.

The thoughts of the book meet the needs of the nation at this crisis, and prepare it for its return.

1. It tells of Jehovah's choice of Israel and His guidance of the nation throughout its history.

2. It shows that the opportunity of service offered by the Return is at hand.

3. It teaches the omnipotence of God in contrast to the insignificance of man and the impotence of idols.

Such thoughts as these are calculated to shame the idolater, rouse the indifferent, and comfort the despairing.

(3) Other evidence.

1. The local colour suggests the author's intimacy with Babylon. Note his familiarity with idols and their manufacture ($40^{19,20}$ 44^{9-20} $46^{1,2}$); the atmosphere of Mesopotamia (49^{10}); Babylonian ritual ($43^{23,24}$), superstition ($47^{9,12,13}$), mythology ($51^{9,10}$), and commerce ($55^{1,2}$).

2. The style of ch. 40—55 differs from that of the first

part of the book; Deutero-Isaiah writes as a poet rather than an orator. His language is distinctive, e.g. the idea which he attaches to the word 'righteousness' (salvation) is that of a prophet of exile, not of an exponent of civic justice.

No contrary evidence.

No claim is made in any part of the book that these chapters are by the son of Amoz, and the force of such passages as are quoted in the New Testament is not affected by authorship.

The audience to whom the prophecy is addressed.

Those to whom the prophecy was addressed had already endured some forty years of captivity. As the exilic literature shows (cf. Lamentations and the exilic Psalms), it was a generation which had endured terrible calamities. Sin and suffering, remorse, revenge, fear and hope, shame and hate, all find expression in the writings of the time. The exiles were a people in whom pain had developed an acute conscience, yet they clung to their unfaltering hope, and saw in the advent of Cyrus an immediate opportunity.

I. (a) Chapters 40–48. The Deliverance of Israel and Cyrus the Deliverer

Prologue. The Four Voices, ch. 40^{1-11}.

$40^{1,2}$. The Prophets are told to speak to God's people a message of forgiveness and comfort. God pleads with His suffering people, and when He has gained an entrance into their heart the prophet proclaims that the time of the nation's suffering is over, '*Accomplished* is the warfare, *absolved* the guilt, *sufficiently expiated* the sin.'[1]

40^{3-5}. The second voice calls the pardoned to action, offering the promise of God's help once they have committed themselves to effort.

40^{6-8}. In answer to the complaint of an exiled people that life is transitory, the third voice proclaims the abiding power of the Word of the Lord, the divine permanence (cf. 40^{28} 41^{4}).

40^{9-11}. The fourth voice bids Zion declare in strains half martial, half pastoral, the triumph of Jehovah who returns

[1] G. A. Smith, *Isaiah*, vol. ii, p. 79.

to His own. He shall 'gather in His arms' and 'gently lead' home the people, who a generation before had been driven forth into exile.

The prophet addresses two classes in the community, the idolaters and the despondent. Those who, crushed by the thought that Jehovah had failed, had turned to idolatry, are aroused by the scornful description of the manufacture of an idol ($40^{19,20}$), contrasted with two declarations of God's glory ($40^{12-18,21-24}$). He reminds those who, feeling that God had abandoned a nation that was a failure, had lost hope, of the unfailing purpose of God and His power to inspire (40^{25-31}). Note the seemingly inverted climax in 40^{31}. Addresses to the Hebrews proving God's power and faithfulness, ch. 40^{12-31}.

In face of the doubt and shifty incapacity of the heathen world, Jehovah holds a contest with the idols, claiming Cyrus as His chosen instrument, destined to fulfil His age-long purpose (41^{1-7}). Addresses to the heathen proving God's power to publish and perform, ch. 41.

God comforts His chosen. Israel will be redeemed from bondage by Jehovah's righteous plan, and the 'worm Jacob' shall become 'a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth', able to scatter its enemies; the afflicted exile shall be restored by the almighty power of God (41^{8-20}). The oracles are bidden 'to produce their cause', to prove, by saying something explicit, their capacity to predict. In answer to their silence or ambiguity, Jehovah once more lays claim to Cyrus, and the verdict is given in favour of His sole sovereignty (41^{21-29}).

The mission of the Servant is defined (42^{1-9}). The proclamation of the Servant is followed by a hymn of praise (42^{10-13}), in which Jehovah is represented as a warrior come to succour His people. The succeeding verses describe His unshareable pain and effort for their redemption (42^{14-17}). The chapter ends with an exhortation and a lament over a people who have rejected opportunity, and have ignored chastisement (42^{18-25}). God's Love manifested.

The chosen are gathered from east and west, ransomed at the cost of great nations, and restored to their own land God's Redemption accomplished,

ch. 43–44[5].

(43[1–7]). They witness, blind and deaf though they be, to Jehovah's truth and righteousness (43[8–13]). The new exodus from Babylon is contrasted with the old exodus from Egypt (43[14–21]), for although the nation has wearied Jehovah with its iniquities and neglected to honour Him, He forgives them utterly (43[22–25]). They have been punished for the sins of the past (43[26–28]), and now all is compassion. Jehovah will pour out His spirit upon them, so that Jacob, 'the supplanter,' becomes Jeshurun, 'the upright one.' Realizing its vocation, the purified nation moves the heathen to acknowledge Jehovah (44[1–5]).

God's Holiness vindicated, ch. 44[6–23].

God is proclaimed as the Eternal, the Only, the All-wise (44[6–8]; cf. 28[23–29] and p. 31). The prophet's scorn reveals the incapacity of the idols (44[9–20]). Israel is exhorted to remember its God, who forgives and redeems (44[21–23]).

Cyrus the instrument of Redemption, ch. 44[23]–45.

The purpose of redemption is carried out by Cyrus, whom God, the Creator of the world, claims as the instrument of His divine purpose to restore Jerusalem and the cities of Judah (44[24–28]). To this end all difficulties shall be cleared from the path of the conqueror (45[1–3]). Though he know it not, this Gentile is to restore the outcast of Israel, and willingly or unwillingly the Hebrew must accept him as the Deliverer (45[4–13]). The deliverance of Israel accomplished, the heathen nations shall do homage to Israel as the people of Jehovah (45[14–17]). Jehovah, the 'universal Ruler of the world which He has created for order and not confusion'[1] (45[18]), declares the reasonable purpose of His counsels, which are explicit, intelligible and true (45[19–21]). He summons the world to turn to Him for salvation, and they come ashamed of their former hostility (45[22–25]).

God's Choice of Cyrus justified, ch. 46.

In this chapter, of which the prevailing characteristic is its irony, the prophet describes Bel and Nebo, the great gods of Babylon, dragged from their pedestals and placed on the backs of tired beasts, unable to help themselves or those that trust in them (46[1,2]). The idols which weary

[1] Whitehouse, *Isaiah* (Century Bible), vol. ii, p. 127.

and exhaust their worshippers are contrasted with Jehovah, a God who 'bears' (46^{3-7}). He is pledged to fulfil His counsel by the instrumentality of Cyrus, 'a ravenous bird from the east, the man of My counsel from a far country,' and the pedants among the Hebrews, who resent an alien Deliverer, or the despairing, who murmur at the postponement of return, must accept Jehovah's plan (46^{8-13}).

The Fall of Babylon, ch. 47.

In a taunt song, Babylon is described under the figure of a luxurious woman who becomes a slave or captive. Because of her sins, cruelty (47^{6}), self-sufficiency (47^{7}), pride (47^{8}), superstition ($47^{9,12}$), she shall be dethroned; childlessness and widowhood shall come upon her, and her enchantments shall not save her (47^{13}). The poem ends with a picture of desolation (47^{15}).

Jehovah's Control of Prophecy, ch. 48.

The Israelites are summoned and bidden to witness to the fulfilment of past predictions, made in former days, in order to prove to them the futility of idolatry (48^{1-6a}).

New truths—the advent of Cyrus as the Gentile Messiah—hitherto withheld lest Israel should fall into the sin of boastfulness, are now made known (48^{6b-16}).

A passage follows expressing God's compassion for the sins of Israel, which have stood in the way of their salvation (48^{17-19}), and the section closes with a call to leave Babylon (48^{20-21}).

Summary of ideas characteristic of ch. 40–48.

1. The omnipotence of God as sole Sovereign of the universe. (Note the frequent and emphatic use of the pronoun 'I'.)

2. The power of Jehovah alone to predict and to fulfil prediction.

3. Jehovah's concern for sin.

4. The stupidity and futility of idolatry.

Cyrus

Condition of Western Asia in the Sixth Century B.C.

After the fall of Nineveh in 607 B.C., Babylonia under Nebuchadrezzar had gained the mastery over the southern part of the Assyrian Empire, while to Media had fallen the

north between the rivers Halys and Indus. To the west lay the Empire of Lydia, reaching to the coast of the Aegean. Intercourse between the three great capitals, Babylon, Ecbatana, and Sardis, must have been frequent, so through Sardis and its lordship over the Asiatic Greeks Asia joined hands with Greece.

In 585 Alyattes, King of Lydia, and Kyaxares, King of Media, met in battle, after which Nebuchadrezzar, King of Babylon, interfered, and a treaty was concluded between the three powers, which was still standing thirty years later, when Croesus was King of Lydia, Astyages King of Media, and Nabonidos King of Babylon.

Rise of Cyrus.

Suddenly the peace of Western Asia was disturbed by the appearance of Cyrus. Of Aryan race, he was hereditary King of Anshan, a district between the Persian Gulf and the Zagros mountains, and he soon united under his rule the provinces of Elam, Media, and Persia (549–546), thus extending the borders of his kingdom westwards to the Halys and looking down on Babylon no longer from the east but from the north (cf. Isa. $41^{2,25}$).

First Attempt upon Babylon.

His first attempt upon Babylon was unsuccessful, probably on account of the magnificent fortifications which Nebuchadrezzar had drawn between the Tigris and the Euphrates at the place where these two rivers most nearly meet. These consisted of a strong wall and canals, with a huge reservoir from which to flood them, and a fortress to protect the basin. He therefore turned against Lydia.

Conquest of Lydia.

On hearing the fate of his brother-in-law Astyages, Croesus of Lydia appealed to the oracles for help. He first tested their reliability by a simple question, and when only from Delphi and Amphiaraus came satisfactory replies, he consulted them concerning the present danger, and sent presents of fabulous value to propitiate them. They sent ambiguous replies, 'that he might fly his kingdom when a mule became King of the Medes', and that 'if he went to war with Cyrus he would destroy a great empire'. Note Isaiah's vivid descrip-

tion, in $41^{1-7,21-29}$, of the oracles' doubt and of the priests and idol-manufacturers busy making a new set of gods ($41^{6,7}$?).

Soon the real meaning of the shifty, ambiguous phrases of the oracles was made clear. Political and religious preparations alike proved vain. After a seeming victory, Croesus fell back on Sardis, but Cyrus followed him up by forced marches (41^{3}), surprised him near the walls of his capital, and routed the Lydian cavalry by the help of his camels. After fourteen days' siege he scaled the walls of Sardis, whose king, with his empire and wealth, lay at the feet of the conqueror, though the actual subjugation of Asia Minor was only effected gradually.

Conquest of Babylon.

If speed in action was one of the qualities of Cyrus, power to wait was another. After an interval of eight years, he once more attacked Babylon. It would seem from the inscriptions that Herodotus' well-known story, of how his soldiers took the city by wading up the half-empty bed of the river, is untrue. Avoiding the northern wall, he drove the Babylonian king into Borsippa, whilst the inhabitants of Babylon surrendered to the General Gubaru. Belshazzar, the king's son, soon perished in a night attack (cf. Daniel 5).

Owing to the unpopularity of Nabonidos, Cyrus himself entered the city as a deliverer, and soon he began that policy of conciliation by which he allowed the captive nations to return to their homes with their gods, and Israel to carry back the Temple treasure.

Conceptions of the Character of Cyrus.

All recognize in Cyrus a definite mission and a splendid personality. To the Greek he was the ideal hero, as he is painted in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* and Herodotus' history, the example of a perfect childhood, youth, and manhood, the ideal prince (note his treatment of captive kings and his ability to content the various races of the empire), far-seeing and successful in all he undertook.

A. Greek.

B. Chaldean.

To the Chaldean he was the bringer of peace, the friend and comrade of the gods, and the upright. (See the inscriptions given below.)

C. Hebrew.

To the Hebrew Cyrus was the tool of God and had the requisite qualities to make him effective. He is the quick marcher (41^3), the conqueror (45^{1-3}), the one who swoops like a bird of prey (46^{11}). Therefore God raised up in righteousness—i.e. to effect His purpose (45^{13})—the man of His counsel (46^{11}), calling him from a far country to be His shepherd (44^{28}), and the saviour of the chosen from Babylon (48^{14}). Although he was no monotheist (see Inscriptions and Isa. 45^5), God chose him, and the Hebrews must accept this alien as Jehovah's anointed (45^1).

Extracts from 'Annalistic Tablet of Cyrus' found 1879.

After stating that Cyrus ('Kurâsh'), King of Anshan, went to war with Astyages, whose troops revolted and delivered their king into his hands, and giving further details, the tablet goes on: 'In the month of Tammuz (July), when Cyrus, in the city of Upê (Opis), on the banks of the river Zalzallat, had delivered battle against the troops of Akkad, he subdued the inhabitants of Akkad. Wherever they gathered themselves together, he smote them. On the 14th day of the month, Sippar was taken without fighting. Nabuna'id fled. On the 16th, Gubaru, governor of the country of Guti, and the soldiers of Cyrus, without fighting entered Babylon. In consequence of delaying, Nabuna'id was taken prisoner in Babylon. To the end of the month the shield (-bearer)s of the country of Guti guarded the gates of E-sagil; no one's spear approached E-sagil, or came within the sanctuaries, nor was any standard brought therein. On the 3rd day of Marchesvan (November), Cyrus entered Babylon. Dissensions (?) were allayed (?) before him. Peace for the city he established: peace to all Babylon did Cyrus proclaim. Gubaru, his governor, appointed governors in Babylon. From the month of Kislev (December) to the month of Adar (March—viz. in the following year, 537), the gods of the country of Akkad, whom Nabuna'id had brought down to Babylon, returned to their own cities. On the 11th day of Marchesvan, during the night Gubaru made an assault (?), and slew the King's son (?). From the 27th of Adar (March) to the 3rd

of Nisan (April) there was lamentation in Akkad: all the people smote their heads.'[1]

Extracts from the Cylinder of Cyrus.

'Cyrus, King of Elam, he (Merodach) proclaimed by name for the sovereignty . . . whom he had conquered with his hand, he governed in justice and righteousness. Merodach, the great lord, the restorer of his people, beheld with joy the deeds of his vice-gerent, who was righteous in hand and heart. To his city of Babylon he summoned his march, and he bade him take the road to Babylon; like a friend and a comrade he went at his side. The weapons of his vast army, whose number, like the waters of a river, could not be known, he marshalled at his side. Without fighting or battle he caused him to enter into Babylon; his city of Babylon feared. The god . . . has in goodness drawn nigh to him, has made strong his name. I am Cyrus . . . I entered Babylon in peace . . . Merodach the great lord (cheered) the heart of his servant. . . . My vast armies he marshalled peacefully in the midst of Babylon; throughout Sumer and Accad I had no revilers . . . Accad, Marad . . . I restored the gods who dwelt within them to their places, and I enlarged (for them) seats that should be long enduring . . . all their peoples I assembled and I restored their lands. And the gods of Sumer and Accad whom Nabonidos, to the anger of the lord of the gods (Merodach) had brought into Babylon, I settled in peace in their sanctuaries by command of Merodach, the great lord. In the goodness of their hearts may all the gods whom I have brought into their strong places daily intercede before Bel and Nebo, that they should grant me length of days; may they bless my projects with prosperity, and may they say to Merodach, my lord, that Cyrus the King, thy worshipper, and Kambyses his son (deserve his favour).'[2]

(b) The 'Servant' Passages

Author-ship.

The most important of the 'Servant' passages consist of four songs, i.e. 42^{1-4} 49^{1-6} 50^{4-9} 52^{13}–53. It has been suggested

[1] Driver, *Daniel* (Cambridge Bible), pp. xxix, xxx.

[2] Sayce, *Fresh Light from the Ancient Monuments*, pp. 138–40.

by some scholars that these songs were written by an older and greater poet, and have been embedded in the work of Deutero-Isaiah. Others see no reason for assigning the poems to a different author, and see a close connexion with their context.

Significance of the 'Servant'.

With regard also to the identity of the Servant, there are different opinions. 'Is he a Person or a Personification?' If the former, who? If the latter, of what? In view of the wide diversity of opinion existing among critics, it is perhaps best to make no attempt to answer the questions. For purposes of explanation, however, we may regard the Servant as *potentially* all Israel, though *actually* all do not accept the mission of service; few of the nation are prophets, fewer martyrs, and when it is a question of vicarious suffering, sin-bearing and expiation, it is sometimes difficult to determine whether the whole nation, part of the nation, or a Person is present to the mind of the writer. Possibly to the Eastern mind the distinction between the community and the individual was not so well defined as it is to us, and so they were able to express their ideal for humanity in terms of national life. Even the famous passage 52^{13}–53 gains in significance if interpreted primarily as an exposition of the experiences of the ideal Israel in exile and their work for the world. Scholars, however, seem agreed that whatever the original significance of the 'Servant' passages, their meaning was only fully satisfied by One. Their fulfilment is recognized as accomplished in Christ:—

1. By Christ himself, Luke 18^{31-33};
2. By the apostles and evangelists, Matt. 12^{17-21} and 16^{21} 20^{28} 26^{28} Acts 3^{13-26} 8^{30-35} 1 Pet. $2^{22,23}$;
3. By St. Paul, Rom. $15^{20,21}$.

The Chosen People as the Servant.

The selection of Israel as the 'chosen' presents a difficulty if the idea of choice be connected with privilege, but if it involves service and suffering, it is not so difficult to see why great peoples were to be sacrificed for the chosen (43^3), in order that the chosen might serve the world.

Racial Fitness.

The prophet lays great stress on the pre-natal choice of Israel for service (43[1] 44[1,2] 46[3] 49[1]). Their desert training fitted them for their peculiar religious privileges.

National Fitness and Training.

Their distinctive discipline began with the call of Abraham (51[2]), and their religious capacity was symbolized in Jacob's power of dreaming, wrestling, and waiting (Hos. 12[4,12]). Their education was unique (42[20,21,24,25]) in the past, and in the future it would be no less so (43[1–7,14–21]).

All Israel potentially Servant.

This fitness and this training belonged to all Israel, and God's purpose included the redemption of the nation (41[8–20]), to be His witness to the world (43[9–13]). But all did not respond to the spiritual call (42[18–25]), though the latent capacity for service was there (43[8]). God's compassion is infinite, and though they have rejected Him, of His free grace He forgives them, and quickens them by His spirit, so that the accomplishment of the task becomes possible (43[22]–44[5]). But this grace can only be granted to the repentant, and so though potentially all Israel are the Servant, actually only the spiritual-minded (cf. the remnant in Isaiah I) are capable of service.

Four Songs. (1) ch. 42[1–4].

God speaks. The service of man implies the service of God. Note the stress the writer lays on the first personal pronoun. The purpose of service is to establish in the world at large a religion which is practical. Its temper is not self-assertive, but meek and gentle, and its methods are rather constructive than destructive. To the success of such service for Israel and for the world, God pledges His omnipotence (cf. 42[5–9]).

(2) ch. 49[1–6].

The Servant speaks a message of world-wide import. His end is the glory of God. This is accomplished by a service of speech (cf. *prŏphētēs*), whose 'edge' and polish are obtained in solitude with God, in 'the shadow of his hand' and 'in his quiver'. The Servant's sense of failure, his resignation and trust, are answered by a promise of success, reaching far beyond the rescue of the lost of Israel to the ingathering of the Gentiles.

(3) ch. 50^{4-9}.

The Servant speaks again as Prophet. He is prepared for his mission of teaching by persistent attention to the lessons of common life. His prophecy leads him to martyrdom—the service of suffering. Martyrdom becomes possible to him because of his conviction of the nearness of God. The passage is followed by an appeal to Israel to imitate the servant in his trust (cf. $50^{10,11}$).

(4) ch. 52^{13}–53.

The passage is a hymn in stanzas. As printed in the Revised Version it falls into five strophes of three verses each. The stanzas grow longer and the meaning deeper as the poem advances. The opening words of the poem suggest the main theme—the 'Triumph' (*prosper*, vide margin R.V.) of vicarious suffering in spite of apparent failure.

The language is simple, and throughout, the poem is marked by the use of parallelism (i.e. two lines alike in meaning, though differing in sound), a style suitable for the expression of regret, remorse, grief and recollection, whilst the very sound of the letters in Hebrew is said to heighten the effect.

The passage contains the prophet's most profound teaching, the most profound truth in the Old Testament. But the doctrine is not enforced authoritatively, rather the haunting personality of the Servant is before us until contemplation and experience have done what the voice of authority can never do, and we stand convinced of the efficacy of redemptive suffering. 'It became Him . . . in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the author of their salvation perfect through sufferings' (Heb. 2^{10}).

Stanzas in detail (as given in Revised Version).

1. Jehovah speaks. The Servant's suffering is efficacious. His pain shall result in glory, and those who scorned shall learn to reverence, inspired with awe by a new truth.

2. Bewildered and penitent men question the meaning of the Servant's suffering, to which they have been indifferent.

3. At last they realize that the sufferings which have bewildered them, which have filled them with contempt, which they have regarded as penal, are in reality vicarious and redemptive, and they pour forth their confession.

4. Guiltless and all-knowing, the Servant is silent in suffering, for he has no need to express contrition or doubt. He is the victim of a judicial murder, and his contemporaries look on in apathy at his sufferings, and finally give him a felon's grave.

5. Behind the suffering of the Servant is the will of God. God has accepted him as a 'sin offering', setting man right with God. 'His death was no mere martyrdom or miscarriage of human justice; in God's intent and purpose, but also by its own voluntary offering, it was an expiatory sacrifice.'[1] The Servant's work is accomplished; he reigns victorious, and by making the service of man possible to man, he has proved his power.

(c) Chapters 49–55 (exclusive of the Servant Passages). The Return

The Way, ch. 49^{7-18}.

Just as Cyrus made the return possible from a political standpoint, so the Servant removed the moral difficulties. Following upon the second song, comes a promise to Israel, despised and downtrodden, of eminence and influence. The way to Jerusalem is pictured; it is the old hard journey, but its rigours are abated by a God of love (49^{10}), who is a God of power (49^{11}).

Difficulties removed, ch. 49^{14}–51^{8}.

1. Those who fear that Jehovah has forgotten them, are reminded that His love is greater than that of a woman to her child; that the image of a restored, perfected Zion is ever present with God, a sure pledge that the city will be rebuilt and thronged by her children (49^{14-21}).

2. Those who fear the strength of the tyrant are reminded of the power of 'the Mighty One of Jacob', and the promise is given that the Gentiles shall restore the exiles (49^{22-26}).

3. Those who fear that there is no return from exile, that the position is irretrievable, the victims helpless, are answered by the ironic questions, 'Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?' 'Which of my creditors is it to whom I have

[1] G. A. Smith, *Isaiah*, vol. ii, p. 364.

sold you?' The only real obstacle in the way of return is the lack of response to Jehovah's offer of help (50^{1-3}).

4. Those who feel that the captives are too few and too feeble to form a people are reminded that the chosen are all the seed of one man, Abraham. No people is so petty but Jehovah's miraculous power can make it great (51^{1-3}).

The righteousness of Jehovah overcomes all obstacles. His law shall be established, His judgement revealed, for His purpose for humanity is enduring. Those who grope after 'salvation' are reminded of Jehovah's imperishable purpose (51^{4-8}).

Calls on the eve of return addressed (a) to Jehovah, ch. 51^{9}–54.

1. The next section opens with a prayer to Jehovah to rouse Himself as in days of yore when He established order out of chaos. The answer is a magnificent expression of the power and love of God, the 'Maker', before whose omnipotence the power of man shrivels into puny insignificance. His purpose is a universal salvation including the restoration of Zion (51^{9-16}).

(b) to Zion.

2. Jerusalem is roused out of her lethargy of exile. She is reminded that her time of suffering is over; the cup of Jehovah's fury, which she has drained to the dregs, will be passed into the hand of those that afflicted her (51^{17-23}).

3. Zion is bidden to doff her slave-garb and don glorious attire (cf. ch. 47). For the honour of His Name, Jehovah will redeem the people whose sufferings have brought no gain, only profanation of His Name (52^{1-6}, and cf. Ezekiel).

4. Messengers and watchmen bid Zion rejoice, because Jehovah returns to His 'Ariel' (Isa. $29^{1,2}$). The ransomed, who come with the Lord before them and the God of Israel as their rearward, are welcomed and received in triumph (52^{7-12}).

The prophet pictures Zion as a childless woman. Jehovah recovers His afflicted and desolate bride, His love brings her back to wifehood, and she becomes the mother of a countless seed, for Jehovah's mercy is everlasting (54^{1-10}, and cf. 53^{10}).

Finally, the prophet describes Zion restored and beautified

with all manner of precious stones; the righteousness of the new community corresponds with the outward splendour of the city. The people dwell in security and peace (54^{11-17}).

An Appeal to the Worldly, ch. 55.

In this chapter the prophet utters God's gracious invitation to the busy, the commercially absorbed, to leave the merchandise of Babylon and to surrender themselves and be obedient. Then shall this commercial people become spiritually quickened, so as to be able to witness to the world the power and love of Jehovah. In contrast to this picture of worldliness and selfishness the prophet describes the free grace of God. If only sinners will return to Him, He will forgive them. His ways are gracious beyond imagination, His purposes sure as the processes of nature. A jubilant return is certain and a renovated earth shall bear witness to the love and faithfulness of God.

II. Chapters 56–66

Date and Authorship.

With ch. 56 the tone and scene of the prophecy seem to change; for the most part the exultant note is silenced, the habitual phrases are absent, Babylon is left behind. Many of the chapters picture an Israelite community settled in Judea, having an ordered ritual bringing formalism in its train. They suggest a settled but degenerate society given over to idolatry.

On the other hand, throughout the section certain passages occur which obviously recall the style and tone of Deutero-Isaiah (e.g. ch. $57^{14,15}$ 60 $62^{10,11}$ 63^{1-7}, &c.). Hence differences of opinion arise as to the date and authorship of this part of the book.

1. Some critics maintain that the passages which recall Deutero-Isaiah are due to his influence upon a later writer, whose work describes the period after the return (*temp.* Ezra, Nehemiah, Malachi). This writer they term the 'Trito-Isaiah'.

2. Others hold that this section of the book is a collection

of a number of prophecies of different origin, but belonging probably in every case to a period after the exile.

Duties and temptations of civic life, ch. 56–59. Exclusiveness.

The people are reminded of their civic and religious duties, and especially of the necessity of keeping the Sabbath. The exclusive spirit is to give place to a comprehensiveness which will extend to the alien and the outcast the privileges of the new community, so that Jehovah's sanctuary becomes a house of prayer for all peoples (56^{1-8}).

Selfishness and Idolatry.

The prophets are so lazy and degenerate, the rulers are so self-seeking and greedy, that the only peace their victims, the righteous, know, is the peace of death ('rest in their beds'), whereby they escape the final catastrophe. A bastard race has turned to idolatry, and has sought foreign deities instead of Jehovah, who alone works effectually (56^{9}–57^{13}).

Then follows a proclamation of the divine attributes of God. Yet this infinite God condescends to abide with the contrite and humble, and help him in his need. Wrath gives place to mercy, the penitent are healed, and a grateful people dwell in peace; but a far different fate awaits the unrepentant (57^{15-21}).

Fasting.

With authority and vehemence, yet self-control, the prophet denounces the religious and social sins of the age. Mechanical fasting and ceremonial observance, the result of an unreal religion (cf. Amos and Isa. 1), exist side by side with selfishness and cruelty; yet the people are surprised that their efforts do not alleviate their sufferings and bring prosperity. True fasting is born of love and expresses itself in sympathy and charity. It avoids oppression, scorn and backbiting, and demands real self-denial. Such fasting brings blessing in its train (58^{1-12}; cf. Isa. 61^{1-3} Matt. 6^{16-18} $25^{35,36}$ 1 Cor. 13).

Sabbath-keeping.

Sabbath-keeping is enjoined as an acknowledgement of Jehovah (cf. Exod. 20^{8-11}). Finding pleasure in its observance leads to delight in Jehovah ($58^{13,14}$).

Oppression and Injustice.

The civic sins of the period are described as the cause of the national misery. They stand between the people and

the presence of Jehovah. He is described as having the form, passions, and armour of a man ($59^{1,2,16-19}$). He feels hotly for His people and His will is urgent to save them. He comes and overthrows the enemy, and His name is acknowledged by all.

The crimes referred to are not the outrages of a barbarous age; society is organized and the machinery of civilization exists (59^{3-15}). Finally, a redeemer is promised to Zion, Jehovah's spirit is poured out on the faithful, and the covenant is ratified (59^{20-21}).

The ideal Zion, ch. 60.

Zion is bidden to shine in the dawning of her new day of glory as a city in the rising sun, and to reflect the glory of Jehovah over a darkened earth. Her face is radiant with joy as she welcomes her children from afar. The wealth of the world is carried to her feet. Vast caravans bring the riches of the east, ships bear the treasure of the west, thus opening out a new prospect to Israel, and from every quarter her sons gather home (60^{1-9}). The great of the earth shall serve the glorified city, and its wealth enrich the place where Jehovah dwells. Her righteous people shall dwell in security and multiply greatly; 'her magistracy shall be peace, and her overseers righteousness,' 'her walls salvation, and her gates praise.' 'The Lord shall be to her an everlasting light, her God her glory' (60^{10-22}).

The Gospel of Salvation, ch. 61–63.

The good tidings of salvation are proclaimed by the prophet. The broken-hearted are to be healed, the captives liberated, for the day of the Lord is at hand. Grief shall give way to joy, for the Lord's people shall be planted like oaks. The ruined land shall be restored, and the people shall become a nation of priests, their position and that of the heathen being reversed (61^{1-8}). Israel shall be acknowledged as 'the seed which the Lord hath blessed', and the glory of her salvation shall be as the beauty of spring (61^{9-11}). The prophet will not cease his intercession until this consummation is achieved in the sight of all the world. The city shall be restored, and once more made the bride of Jehovah.

Jehovah, importuned by His remembrancers (whether prophets or angelic beings), swears that never again shall the resources of Judah be exploited to enrich the alien. Finally, a command is given to the people to leave Babylon and accept salvation, and become worthy of their new names (62^{1-12}).

The Divine Avenger, ch. 63^{1-6}.

In abrupt contrast to the passages on either side stands the picture of the Avenger. The Lonely Hero comes marching in his strength, inspired by the power of his isolation to avenge the wrongs of his people. Like one that treads the wine-vat, he is red with the blood of the enemy, but the salvation has been wrought alone (63^{1-6}).

A Prayer for Israel, ch. 63^{7}–64.

The prayer opens with a description of the graciousness of Jehovah. Of old He had placed trust in His people ('surely', *v.* 8) and had borne them, but His love was met with rebellion and ingratitude, so He became their enemy. In their distress they remember the wonders of Egypt and of the Exodus, and pray to a God whom their neglect has seemed to put at a distance, that He may have mercy again, and may accept them as His people, for He is their Father, however degenerate the race has become. The suppliant entreats Jehovah to rouse Himself as of old, to strike terror into the heart of the adversary, and to help the faithful. Their sin has become their punishment, and he prays for its removal; the nation is spiritually dead, their misery is incurable, they deserve nothing. This is shown by the desolation of the land, the overthrow of the city, and the ruin of the Temple. Yet Jehovah's power is as of old.

Israel's Ingratitude, ch. 65.

Jehovah's love has been disregarded by a people who have rejected Him and have turned to idolatry. Retribution must follow such sin. Only the loyal can dwell in safety and enjoy the bounty of the land (65^{1-12}). The fate of the evil and the good is further contrasted (65^{13-15}). God is proved true, and His truth shall be acknowledged in an ideal future, which shall bring with it all earthly blessings, communion with God, and harmony in the animal world (65^{16-25}).

In the first four verses of this chapter God's true sanctuary is described, and evil ritual is condemned. There follows in close connexion a series of poems addressed to the loyal and the disloyal. The Judgement, ch. 66.

1. The holy are bidden to ignore the mockery of their enemies, for Jehovah's vengeance is at hand. The city shall be repeopled, and the true children of Zion rejoice in her (66^{5-11}).

2. Continuing the simile of a mother, the prophet tells how her loyal children shall be restored to her, with the wealth of the nations, while the disloyal shall be smitten for their idolatry with fiery judgement (66^{12-17}).

3. After a signal display of God's power among the Gentiles, those who escape shall be sent to proclaim His glory to the nations that have not known Him. These spontaneously restore the Hebrews to their own land, where they become priests of the Lord. Israel's position shall be secure for ever (66^{18-22}). The last two verses are possibly an intrusion.

C. THE POST-EXILIC PROPHETS

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Persian Period

Persian Kings.

The Persian Empire was founded by Cyrus, and it fell with the defeat of Darius III by Alexander the Great at Arbela 331 B.C.

Cyrus I (the Great)	539
Cambyses	529
Pseudo-Smerdis	522
Darius I (Hystaspis)	521
Xerxes (*Ahasuerus*)	485
Artaxerxes I (Longimanus)	464
Xerxes II	424
Sogdianus	423
Darius II (Nothus)	423
Artaxerxes II (Mnemon)	404
Artaxerxes III (Ochus)	358
Arses	338
Darius III (Codomanus)	335

Position of the Jews.

During all this time the Jews were subject to Persian rule; they owed it to the clemency of the Persian kings that they were established on their own territory once more as a colony, to become a church, if not a nation. Provided they paid the taxes and remained quiet, they enjoyed full social and religious freedom. Roads and posts bound the vast Persian Empire together, and everywhere Jews were scattered through its vast extent (these formed the nucleus of the 'Dispersion'). The main centres of Jewish life were at Ecbatana, Susa, Babylon, and Jerusalem.

I. From the Capture of Babylon to the Completion of the Temple, 538–516 B.C.

Condition of the new Community

From the book of Ezra (Ezra $1–4^{5}$ $4^{24}–6$) it would seem that a band of Jews bearing the Temple vessels and much treasure, and representing all classes of the nation—priests,

Levites, Temple servants, and laity—returned in 537 B.C. and settled in Jerusalem and the surrounding villages. The official head of the restored community was Sheshbazzar, whether the same person as Zerubbabel or not is uncertain. Led by Zerubbabel, a prince of the house of David, and Jeshua, the High Priest, they once more raised an altar on the historic site, and began in 536 B.C. to build the Temple, but were stopped by the interference of the Samaritans. For some sixteen years no further progress was made. It was a period of disaster and disappointment. A hard struggle with barren land and bad seasons and vindictive enemies sapped the national enthusiasm, and the people forgot their great ideals in sordid, selfish interests.

Political Development of the Empire.

Meantime important changes were taking place in the Persian Empire. In 529 B.C. Cyrus was succeeded by Cambyses, who having invaded and conquered Egypt, met with misfortune, and died on his return journey 522 B.C. After a period of some months, during which Pseudo-Smerdis, a usurper, held the throne, the empire fell to Darius, 521 B.C., the wise, politic king, in whose hands the conquests of Cyrus were consolidated. His accession was the signal for a general revolt in the east and north-east of his dominions, and it was only after years of effort that he secured his position in 519 B.C. (Hag. $2^{7,21-23}$).

The Building of the Temple, 520–516 B.C.

In the general upheaval the Jews looked for the fulfilment of their expectations, and their prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, seized the opportunity and urged forward the building of the Temple. The importance of this step was immense. As a symbol of the presence of Jehovah, the Temple was a proof to Israel and to the world at large of His return to the Holy City; as a centre of religion it gave unity and permanence to the life of the chosen people. The efforts of Haggai and Zechariah, backed by Persian patronage, proved successful, and in 516 B.C. the Temple was completed. From this time onward the importance of the priesthood developed, and after the extinction of the house of David in

the person of Zerubbabel, the successors of Jeshua became the leaders of the community.

HAGGAI

[CHIEF SOURCE: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

Haggai the Prophet.

Four prophecies are all that are left to witness to the zeal and persistence of Haggai, about whom nothing is known but his name, though it is generally supposed that he was old when he delivered his message, and that he had seen the former Temple (Hag. 2^3).

Divisions of the Book.

His prophecies were uttered at four different dates towards the end of 520 B.C.:—1 2^{1-9} 2^{10-19} 2^{20-23}.

His Audience.

The people whom Haggai addressed were dispirited and downtrodden; sixteen years of unrewarded struggle with grudging seasons and a barren soil, with fierce and relentless opposition from their Samaritan neighbours, had damped the ardour of the most enthusiastic. Having lost hope, they persuaded themselves that the time to build the Temple had not yet come, and undertook the easier and more congenial task of beautifying their own houses. It was a sordid and selfish generation.

Prophecies in detail. (1) ch. 1.

One autumn day, when the miserable harvests had been gathered and the people realized their poverty, Haggai, addressing Zerubbabel and Jeshua, reproved the people for building 'cieled houses' while the Temple lay waste. Their neglect was the cause of their misery, and they must 'consider their ways'. The result was that in three weeks' time the work was begun, for the spirit of all had been stirred (1^{14}).

(2) ch. 2^{1-9}.

On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, when four weeks' work had brought little result, Haggai gave the people hope by suggesting the political possibilities afforded by the disturbances at the beginning of the reign of Darius. 'GOD was still among them, and the nations should come and offer themselves and their wealth to Him, so that the second Temple should be more glorious than the first.

By means of an allegory drawn from their ritual, Haggai taught the people the penetrating power of sin. The Jews were not cleansed by their ritual; on the contrary, their neglect of the Temple had defiled their whole life, and they must not be disappointed if blessings were delayed. (3) ch. 2^{10-19}.

Haggai held out to Zerubbabel the hope that in the upheaval of the Persian Empire, he should be exalted as God's 'Servant', precious in His eyes and empowered with His authority. (4) ch. 2^{20-23}.

In spite of his plain and unadorned language, his contracted sphere of interest and his unfulfilled prophecy, Haggai deserves to be reckoned among the great Hebrew prophets, for he gave the message needed at the moment and made men act. He taught a great moral truth, and passed down the Messianic hope to the future. Summary of his Teaching.

ZECHARIAH (chapters 1–8)

[Sources: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith. *Minor Prophets*, vol. ii (Century Bible), Driver.]

Zechariah was the son or grandson of Iddo (Neh. $12^{1,16}$), and therefore of priestly family. He was probably a young man who had come up with the caravans from Babylon in 538 B.C., and was associated with Haggai in the work of the restoration of the Temple (Ezra $5^{1,2}$). Learned in the prophecies of the past, he was loyal to their principle rather than to their detail, and sought in them experience, not authority. He was full of interest in the great questions of life, and urged upon the people the moral lessons of their history, but he himself was a gentle, homely man, a lover of peace and quietness. The Man and the Prophet.

1. 1^{1-6}. Oracles spoken in November 520 B.C.

2. 1^{7}–6^{15}. Eight visions, followed by a historical appendix, dated February 519 B.C.

3a. 7. Inquiry about the Fasts, dated December 518 B.C. Divisions of the Book.

3b. 8. Ten short oracles summarizing his teaching on all subjects, probably belonging to the same date as 3a.

Prophecies taken in detail.

1. The Lesson of the Past, ch. 1^{1-6}.

Zechariah reminds the people that though the old prophets are dead, their predictions have been fulfilled in the punishment which overtook the people. Let the present generation learn from the experience of their forefathers and repent while there is time.

2. The eight Visions, ch. 1^{7}–6^{8}.

These are a series of elaborate allegories intended to teach divine truths. They are the outcome of the leisure of exile (cf. Ezekiel's symbolic method). They are characterized by the presence of apocalypse (see visions 2 8), ritual (4 5 6 7), and angels (1 4).

(1) The Horsemen.

1^{7-17}. Four months after Haggai had promised that Jehovah would shake the nations Zechariah sees an assembly of Persian cavalry scouts who prove to be angel horsemen. He learns through their leader and an interpreting angel that they are God's scouts, who have patrolled the world. Comfort is promised to Jerusalem, and vengeance on the heathen, who have erred by excessive severity to Judah.

(2) The Four Horns and the Four Smiths.

1^{18-21}. Zechariah sees four horns and four smiths, representative of the adversaries of Judah and of apocalyptic powers which are to overthrow them.

(3) The New Jerusalem.

2^{1-5}. Zechariah sees a young apprentice who goes forth to measure Jerusalem along the old lines of its foundation, but he is rebuked by an angel for his narrow ideas. Jerusalem is no longer to be a confined fortress, but a large unwalled town with Jehovah for its rampart.

This vision is followed by a lyric (possibly of earlier date), calling on the Jews to return and promising the overthrow of the heathen and the presence of Jehovah.

(4) The Trial and Acquittal of the High Priest.

3. The vision pictures a judgement scene. Satan accuses Joshua before the angel of Jehovah (a token that calamity has befallen the people), but the adversary stands rebuked and he disappears from the vision. Joshua is clothed in new robes, that is, Israel, already rescued, is now sanctified. Joshua is given access to the presence of God, and he and

his fellows are made a portent of the coming of the Messiah. The stone with the seven facets engraved by God is possibly symbolic of the finished Temple.

(5) The Candlestick and the Two Olive-Trees.

$4^{1-6a,10b-14}$. A seven-branched candlestick is fed by seven pipes from a reservoir which stands above. The seven lamps symbolize the eyes of Jehovah. Near by stand two olive-trees, symbolizing Jeshua and Zerubbabel, who are protected by His care, and filled with His spirit.

4^{6b-10a}. Zerubbabel shall overcome all difficulty, 'not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord of hosts', and finish the work which his hands have begun, while those who 'despised the day of small things' shall rejoice to see the completion of the Temple.

(6) The Flying Roll.

5^{1-4}. The prophet sees a flying roll, containing curses on the sins of the land; it enters the house of every thief and perjurer and destroys it. Thus the sinners are exterminated.

(7) The Woman in the Barrel.

5^{5-11}. The living principle of sin, the power of temptation, typified by a woman, is shut up in a barrel and carried by two women with the wings of a stork into the land of Shinar.

(8) The Four Chariots of the Four Winds.

6^{1-8}. The overthrow of the nations, postponed in vision 1, is now begun. Three chariots, drawn by horses of different colours, are sent forth to the north, the west, and the south, while the fourth walks to and fro through the earth. Thus does the prophet represent the overthrow of the enemies of Judah by apocalyptic powers.

Historical Appendix.

6^{9-15}. The text of this passage is at fault. In *v.* [13]: 'and the counsel of peace shall be between them both', two persons are implied, and many scholars are agreed that the person in *v.* [11] who is to be crowned must be the 'Branch' or Messianic King of *v.* [12], represented at the time by Zerubbabel. They would therefore insert the name of Zerubbabel in *v.* [11], or else omit all mention of names. It would simplify the passage also to read with the Septuagint, 'on his right hand' for 'on his throne' in *v.* [13]. The substance of the oracle will therefore be:—

Directions are given for the making of a crown which is to be placed on the head of Zerubbabel, while Jeshua is to

stand at his right hand, in perfect unity with him. The Temple shall be built and 'they that are far off' shall help with the work.

3. (1) Inquiry about the Fasts, ch. 7.

In answer to the inquiry of a deputation, Zechariah bids the people to put away the fasts instituted to commemorate the destruction of Jerusalem and the death of Gedaliah, to practise instead the virtues of civic life, and fulfil its duties as they had been taught by the prophets of old (cf. 8^{19}).

(2) Ten short Oracles, ch. 8.

Each of the oracles begins with the phrase 'Thus saith the Lord', and all are of a hopeful nature. Beginning with the love of Jehovah for His people, they promise to the middle-aged community the presence of the old and young. A complete return of the Jews is foretold; poverty shall give place to plenty, and the land shall yield her increase. Jehovah shall bless His people, if men will but do His will ($8^{16,17}$). Fasts shall give place to feasts and the Gentiles shall be gathered in to Jerusalem, for all will be eager to join themselves to Israel.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Persian Period (*cont.*)

II. From the Completion of the Temple to the Return of Ezra, 516–458 B.C.

Beyond a brief reference in Ezra 4^{6} to the Samaritan opposition, this period of Hebrew history is a blank (unless Ezra 4^{7-23} belongs to it). The hopes of Haggai and Zechariah were doomed to disappointment; the completion of the Temple did not usher in the Messianic age, and the Jews lapsed into insignificance, while the tide of history rolled westwards. The revolt of the Ionians against Persian rule led to the invasion of Greece by Darius I. Then followed the war in which Greece drove back the advancing East in the battles of Marathon, 490 B.C.; Thermopylae and Salamis, 480 B.C.; Plataea and Mycale, 479 B.C. Judah was far beyond the

reach of the struggle, but it cannot have been unaffected by the revolt of Egypt against Darius I and the later revolt against Artaxerxes I. In contrast to the history of these stirring events stands the meagre record of Hebrew insignificance found in the book of Malachi, which, whatever be the exact date of the prophecy, reflects the misery of this period. The gulf between the classes had reappeared, the priests were partial and ignorant, the laity had grown lax with regard to their religious duties, intermarriage with the heathen had become common among a people who had lost all patriotism. It was a period in which men had lost belief in themselves and God. Only a party of zealots maintained the old standards and clung to the old hopes.

III. From the Return of Ezra to the Completion of Nehemiah's Mission, 458-425 (?) B.C.

In 458 B.C. Ezra the priest, 'a ready scribe in the law of Moses,' returned from Babylon with a representative body of Hebrews. Backed by Persian patronage, invested with large authority, he came to examine into the religious state of the country, bringing with him the Book of the Law, his object being to reform the Temple ceremonial on the lines laid down in the 'Priestly Code'. Helped by the better-minded among the people, he made a determined effort to put a stop to the mixed marriages, and the foreign wives were banished. Then Ezra disappears from history for a time (Ezra 7–9). It was probably during this period that an abortive attempt to build the walls was made (Ezra 4^{7-23}).

In 445 B.C. Nehemiah, cupbearer to Artaxerxes, returned from Susa to Jerusalem. His work as Pekah or governor was:—

1. To restore the ruined walls of the depopulated city, still threatened by its persistent enemies (Neh. 1–4 6 7^{1-4}; cf. 12^{27-43}).

2. To relieve the distress which was prevalent in the city

and to establish order in the community (Neh. 5 11^{1-24} 12^{44-47} 13^{1-3}).

3. To help Ezra, who now—444 B.C.—reappears after the lapse of thirteen years, to teach and enforce the Law, and to bind the people by a new covenant which should secure their separation from the heathen. The terms of this covenant are to be found in Neh. 10^{29-39} (Neh. 8–10).

After a return to the Persian court Nehemiah paid a second visit to Jerusalem, where he redressed grievances which had arisen in his absence and carried out further reforms (Neh. 13^{4-31}).

MALACHI

[CHIEF SOURCE: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

The Book anonymous.

The book of Malachi is probably anonymous, though from early times the name 'Malachi' ('My Messenger'), probably adopted from 3^1, has been attached to it. 'Writing from the midst of a poor and persecuted group of people, and attacking the authorities both of Church and State, he preferred to publish the charge anonymously. His name was written in the Lord's own book of remembrance.'[1]

Its Date.

The book is undated. It reflects the period which saw the return of Ezra and Nehemiah, but it seems impossible to assign it with certainty to any exact date, although recent authorities are inclined to place it before 458 B.C. Israel is still under the beneficent Persian rule (1^8), and the Temple is completed ($3^{1,10}$). Note the stress laid on ritual. But sufficient time has elapsed since the reforms of Haggai and Zechariah for laxity and carelessness to creep into the community.

Those to whom the Book is addressed.

The prophet, who probably himself belonged to a small group of the GOD-fearing ($3^{16,17}$ 4^2), addresses two classes among the people.

1. The indifferent—those who, embittered by the misery of the times, had grown careless and disloyal. The priests

[1] G. A. Smith, *Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, p. 345.

were lax, partial, and ignorant, so that the people grew neglectful of their religious duties; divorce and intermarriage with the heathen were common, for, having lost patriotism, they were willing to sacrifice religion for gain; the rich once more oppressed the poor (3^5).

2. The querulous—those who, crushed by the difficulties surrounding them, still clung to ceremonial observances from utilitarian motives, and were dismayed because trouble still continued (1^2 $3^{14,15}$).

Malachi's Message.

For each of these Malachi has his message:—

1. He threatens the wicked with the 'day of judgement' (note the apocalyptic character of the prophecy).

2. He reassures the doubters with promises of preservation in the 'day of judgement', assures them of God's love, and looks to an ideal future, when, abuses having been put away, worship shall be purified and a pious people shall dwell in prosperity and peace.

His Reverence for the Law.

Throughout his book Malachi enforces the teaching of the Deuteronomic Law, but he never loses sight of the spiritual principle behind it, and he insists upon obedience in deference to the character of Jehovah, a God of Love, of Righteousness, of Holiness.

The Style of his Book.

His style is more prosaic than that of most of the prophets, but he is direct and clear, and expresses himself in a form new to prophecy. He states a truth, then raises an objection, and finally makes good his position in a genuine prophetic discourse.

The Book in detail. God's love for Israel, ch. 1^{2-5}.

In answer to the question 'Wherein hast Thou loved us?' Malachi points to the contrast between God's treatment of Judah and His treatment of Edom, whose name suggests the antithesis to the chosen people (cf. Obadiah). Edom is to be driven out of his fastnesses by the Nabataean Arabs, and his country will never be restored.

The Honour due to God, ch. 1^{6}–2^{9}.

Israel is not only neglectful of God's love, but denies Him the honour due to a Father, and is forgetful of His majesty and holiness. The priests are especially blameworthy; they

have received blemished victims, such as no Persian governor would accept, and yet they think them good enough for Jehovah. It would be better for ceremonial worship to cease. But if Israel neglects Jehovah, among the nations His name is honoured (1^{6-14}). The priests have forgotten their responsibilities, and are unworthy of the past. They have become ignorant and unjust, and neglect the duties of their office; unless they repent, they will be disgraced before the people (2^{1-9}).

The Sin of Divorce, ch. 2^{10-16}.

The people are denounced on account of the heathen marriages, which have destroyed the purity of the nation and have led them to divorce their Jewish wives. Their act is therefore a heinous sin, contrary to the will of the Divine Father, inasmuch as it involves a broken covenant.

The coming Judgement, ch. 2^{17}–3^{6}.

In this oracle Malachi addresses the querulous who weary Jehovah by their complaints about the success of sin. He tells them of God's coming as a judge, when the pious shall be separated from the wicked; the priesthood shall be cleansed so that acceptable sacrifices may be offered, and the land shall be purged of sinners.

The Importance of Ritual, ch. 3^{7-12}.

Malachi warns those who, having lost faith in Jehovah, pay no tithes, of the necessity of doing so. Obedience to the Law is the best proof they can offer of their sincerity and zeal.

The Vindication of the Righteous, ch. 3^{13}–4^{3}.

The murmurers questioned the expediency of serving Jehovah when the wicked prosper. The prophet points to a day of judgement which shall sever the wicked from the righteous. The wicked shall be consumed, but the righteousness of the faithful shall be vindicated.

The second Coming of Elijah, ch. 4^{4-6}.

The book ends with an exhortation to obey the Law, and a promise is given of the coming of Elijah. Thus prophecy in the person of its founder will be sent to bring home the Law to the hearts of the people.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Persian Period (*cont.*)

IV. From the Disappearance of Nehemiah to the Rise of Alexander the Great, 425 (?)–331 B.C.

After the death of Artaxerxes I, 424 B.C., a period followed during which very little is known about the Jews. A revolt in the reign of Artaxerxes Ochus (*c.* 350 B.C.) led to persecution, and many Jews were transported to Babylon and the shores of the Caspian Sea.

It was the age of priestly rule (Neh. $12^{10,11}$), and the growth of ritual; of the reign of the Law and the development of the influence of the scribes and of the synagogue. The Temple became the centre of a community, dispersed throughout the world, who paid a voluntary tax for its support and gathered to its feasts.

Narrow as the exclusiveness of this age may seem in contrast with the universalism of Deutero-Isaiah, it was probably this spirit, inculcated by Ezra and Nehemiah, which enabled the Jews to maintain their identity and to meet the subtle influences of Hellenism in a later age. This temper, with the resultant hatred of the heathen, accounts for the revengeful spirit of some of the later prophets, and their expectation of the ultimate vindication of Judaism in its narrow sense. Compare Joel, which probably belongs to this period; also Isaiah 24–27, and Zechariah 9–14, which belong to the Greek period. In contrast cf. the book of Jonah, which returns to the 'larger hope' of Deutero-Isaiah.

JOEL

[CHIEF SOURCES: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith. *Joel and Amos*, in Cambridge Bible Series, Driver.]

The Prophet.

Joel, the son of Pethuel, appears to have been a prophet who lived and taught in Jerusalem (notice the frequent reference to Jerusalem and Zion).

Date of the Book.

As Joel makes no mention of either Assyria or Babylon, it would seem that his book must be very early (before 760 B.C.,

when Assyria first came within the horizon of Hebrew prophecy), or very late (after 538 B.C., when the Babylonian empire fell).

Much of what he says would suit either date:—

1. He addresses a religiously united nation.

2. He limits his hopes for the future to the Jews, an exclusiveness which might belong to an early date, before the universalism of the Hebrew religion had developed, or to the narrow outlook of the period after the Return.

3. His style is direct and simple: either he is an early writer or he adopts the style of an early writer. Cf. 3^{10} with Isa. 2^4 and Mic. 4^3; 3^{16} with Amos 1^2; 3^{18} with Amos 9^{13}, &c.

Those who maintain the early date find evidence for it in the prophet's primitive point of view, his warlike tone, his way of regarding nature. Their methods of accounting for his historical allusions by events of the time from Jehoshaphat to Joash are ingenious, but their arguments are not conclusive.

Those who favour the later date find support in his definite references to the captivity ($3^{1,2}$), and in his mention of the Greeks (3^6), who are not named by any pre-exilic prophet. He never speaks of a king or of the Northern Kingdom, or indeed of political life at all, while stress is laid on the importance of elders, priests and ritual ($1^{13,14}$ $2^{16,17}$). He makes no reference to definite civic or national sins, or to idolatry, which seems to indicate that he is writing after the purification of the nation by the acceptance of the Law (444 B.C.). As regards the parallel passages which occur in his book and in the works of the earlier prophets, he appears to be the borrower, and his use of apocalypse ($2^{30,31}$ $3^{15,16}$) suggests a late date. The prophecy probably belongs to the period between 444 B.C. and 360 B.C., when Artaxerxes Ochus began to persecute the Jews.

Interpretation of the Book.

The interpretation of the book also presents difficulties. In answer to the question whether his description of the locusts is 'literal or allegorical', 'descriptive or predictive', G. A. Smith's opinion may be quoted.

'The allegorical and mystical interpretations of Joel are impossible; and the only reasonable view of our prophet is that which regards him as calling, in ch. 1^2–2^{17}, upon his contemporaries to repent in face of a plague of locusts so unusually severe that he has felt it to be ominous of even the Day of the Lord; and in the rest of his book, as promising material, political and spiritual triumphs to Israel in consequence of their repentance, either already consummated or anticipated by the prophet as certain.'[1]

It must be remembered that Joel, writing as a poet and a prophet, has made use of his imagination and spiritual insight to idealize the locusts and render them portentous.

Divisions of the Book.

(*a*) 1^2–2^{17}. The calamity of the locust plague and an exhortation to repentance.

(*b*) 2^{18}–3. The removal of the calamity, the outpouring of the Spirit on Judah, and the judgement of the heathen.

(a) A Warning from the Locusts and a Call to Repentance, ch. 1^2–2^{17}.

In view of a plague of locusts of unprecedented severity, Joel calls on the land and all classes of its people to mourn (1^{1-12}). Famine, drought, and fire follow in the wake of the locusts, so that even the beasts suffer (1^{16-20}). The priests are to call the people to a solemn fast, for the terrible visitation has even interrupted the daily sacrifice. All must supplicate Jehovah, for the locusts are ominous of the Day of the Lord (1^{13-15}). A fresh call to repentance (2^1) is followed by a still more terrible description of the locusts, the invincible army of Jehovah, now seen to enter the towns (2^{2-11}). Again the prophet urges repentance, so that God may spare a penitent people (2^{12-17}).

(b) God's Answer to His People's Prayer, ch. 2^{18}–3.

The people have taken the prophet's warning and 'turned' to God. Therefore the locusts, 'the northern army,' will be scattered and the land and people and beasts will rejoice in the plenteous rain and the restored fertility, Jehovah being recognized as God (2^{18-27}).

(1) The restoration of nature.

Then God's Spirit will be poured out on His people, while judgement, which is ushered in by apocalyptic terrors, will

(2) The outpouring of the Spirit.

[1] G. A. Smith, *Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, p. 396.

overtake His enemies. Only those who call on Jehovah will be saved (2^{28-32}).

(3) The judgement of the heathen.

The heathen, who have done Judah hideous wrong, are summoned to the valley of Jehoshaphat ('Jehovah judges') (3^{1-8}) apparently for battle, really for destruction at the hand of Jehovah's forces (3^{9-15}). The enemy expelled, Judah is fertilized and a purifying fountain flows from the Temple through the land, while her enemies lie desolate. Judah rests secure with Jehovah in her midst.

Summary.

Joel's work was to rouse a generation given over to formalism by an appeal to the forces of natural calamity, and so to make them realize the immediate presence of God, the necessity for repentance and for spiritual revival.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

The Greek Period

Early Contact with the Greeks.

In very early times there is evidence of connexion between the Philistine coast and the Delta with Crete and the Mediterranean islands. In the time of the Exile the Greeks were known to the Jews as traders (Ezek. 27^{13}), and the Babylonians were brought into contact with the Ionian Greeks through the Lydians. Then came the struggle between Greece and Persia. About 400 B.C. Greece is known to the Hebrews only as a slave-market (Joel 3^{6}), and in Isaiah 66 the 'coasts of Javan' (Ionia) seem very far off.

The Career of Alexander.

The end of the Persian rule in Syria came with the rise of Alexander the Great, King of Macedonia. In 334 B.C., at the head of an army drawn from the Balkan Peninsula, he crossed the Hellespont, defeated the generals of Darius on the Granicus, and after spending a year in securing Asia Minor, he defeated the King of Persia at Issus, 333 B.C. Continuing his march, he captured Damascus, Tyre, and Gaza, and having penetrated into Egypt founded Alexandria. He returned through Syria, then turned east and crossed the Tigris and Euphrates, won a final victory over Darius at

Arbela, 331 B.C., and took possession of Babylon, Persepolis, and Susa. During the next seven years he extended his conquests to the Oxus and the Indus, and then in the midst of his triumph suddenly died, 323 B.C.

The Influence of Hellenism.

In the wake of Alexander's conquests came Hellenism. Wherever he went he founded Greek cities (e.g. Egyptian Alexandria, where was an important Jewish colony specially permeated with Hellenic ideas). In every city the gymnasium for bodily training and the cultivation of *esprit de corps*, the agora for the development of civic life, the stadium and the hippodrome for games and contests, the theatre for the production of the drama, the stoa for discussion, witnessed to the subtle influence of the conqueror. Greek thought, Greek culture, Greek literature, Greek art, and Greek language permeated the east, for the victorious Macedonians were the apostles of Hellenism. But while all other countries thus succumbed to Greek influences, Israel alone remained true to herself and her religion, owing to the work of her reformers and prophets, and her loyalty to their teaching.

Alexander's Successors.

After Alexander's death there was a period when his generals fought for supremacy, and his dominions were finally divided among them. In 301 B.C. four claimants were left as kings of (1) Macedonia and Greece, (2) Thrace and Bithynia, (3) Syria, Babylonia, and the East, and (4) Egypt (Dan. 8^8). The quarrels between the Ptolemies, who made themselves masters of Egypt, and the Seleucidae, who became, in name at least, kings of the Asiatic part of Alexander's dominions, caused much suffering to the Jews. Now once more, as in the eighth and seventh centuries, Palestine became the battle-ground of the rival powers of Egypt and 'Assyria' (Syria), for its timber and trade made it a prize worth winning.

From 320 B.C., when Ptolemy I occupied Jerusalem, till 204 B.C. (with the exception of two intervals of fourteen years each), Palestine was subject to the kings of Egypt. After the battle of Paneion, 198 B.C., it passed into the hands of the kings of Syria, who kept it till the time of the rise of the Maccabees, which was followed by the Roman interference.

But it must be remembered that, whether Egypt or Syria was the master, the influence was Greek.

During this period there were two important parties in the Jewish community—(1) the patriotic, religious party, (2) the party who favoured Greek influence. The quarrel between the two reached its climax in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes (175–164 B.C.), whose attempt to Hellenize the Hebrews resulted in the revolt of the Maccabees.

Dealings of the Conquerors with the Jews.

Josephus tells how Alexander on his second passage through Syria visited Jerusalem. The story is undoubtedly a romance, but Alexander must certainly have encamped in the region, and probably received an embassy from the Jews. On his departure he left behind him colonies of his veterans.

Between 323 and 301 B.C., when Palestine repeatedly changed hands, the Jews must have suffered terribly. Josephus tells how Ptolemy I surprised Jerusalem on a Sabbath day, and took numbers of the Jews captive to Egypt. But after the defeat of Antigonus in 301 B.C. a period of comparative peace followed, and it was the policy of both the Ptolemies and the Seleucids to favour the Jews. They were encouraged to settle in Alexandria and Antioch and given privileges in both cities. Ptolemy II encouraged the work of 'the Seventy', the influence of whose Septuagint Version of the Old Testament has been incalculably far-reaching.

Prophecies belonging to this period.

Isaiah 24–27 (soon after Alexander's campaign).

Isaiah 19^{16-25} (last part of the reign of Ptolemy I).

Zechariah 9–14 (during the contest between Syria and Egypt for the possession of Palestine).

Jonah (*c.* 300 B.C.).

ZECHARIAH (chapters 9–14)

[CHIEF SOURCES: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith. *Minor Prophets*, vol. ii (Century Bible Series), Driver.]

The Question of Authorship.

It seems clear that this part of the prophecy is not by the author of ch. 1–8. The writer 'uses a different phraseology, evinces different interests, and moves in a different circle of

ideas'[1] (Driver). In the early chapters there is a picture of peace, the Temple is being built, the prophet's personality is felt. In the later, there is no mention of the prophet, the times are warlike, the tone fierce, and deliverance only comes after endurance. Hence critics are almost unanimous in separating these chapters from the earlier ones in the book.

Date of the Prophecies.

One group of critics assigns these prophecies to a pre-exilic date, and it is possible to make the historic references fit a period before the exile. But it is also possible without straining the meaning to explain these references in connexion with the circumstances which occurred during or after the campaigns of Alexander, and the weight of modern opinion tends to assign these chapters to the beginning of the third century, though it is admitted that the prophecy may contain fragments belonging to an earlier period. The mention of the Greeks as a great world-power (9^{13}), and many other references (9^{8} 11^{6}, &c.) fit this date.

The Title and Unity of the Book.

Probably Zech. 9–11 Zech. 12–14, and Malachi were originally three anonymous prophecies attached by the editor of the Book of the Twelve to the end of his work (note the phrase 'oracle of the word of Jehovah' at the beginning of each). But as many scholars still assign Zech. 9–14 to one author, the chapters will be treated consecutively.

The Prophecies in detail. Part I. ch. 9–11 13^{7-9}.

An invasion coming from the north destroys Hadrach and Damascus; the wisdom of Sidon and the riches of Tyre are of no avail to save them, nor does Philistia escape. The survivors, being purified, become a 'remnant for our God', who protects His people, while the conquered territory forms part of the Messianic Kingdom (9^{1-8}).

The Messianic Kingdom established, ch. 9.

The Messianic King appears victorious, yet 'lowly and riding on an ass', and ushers in a reign of universal peace ($9^{9,10}$).

True to His covenant sealed by sacrifice, Jehovah brings back the captives to Zion, and they receive double compensation for their suffering. This glorious state must be preceded by war. Jehovah leads the people to battle, overthrows the

[1] Driver, *Minor Prophets*, vol. ii (Century Bible), p. 228.

Greeks in a bloody victory, and saves His chosen. The youths grow strong, the maids beautiful, in a land made fertile by God (9^{11-17}).

Jehovah as Helper, ch. $10^{1,2}$.

It is better to seek prosperity from Jehovah than to trust in idols, diviners, and dreams. These have misled Israel and caused their misfortunes; the people are without a religious director (shepherd).

The Overthrow of Foreign Tyrants, ch. 10^{3-12}.

The Lord will punish the oppressive foreign rulers, and make His 'flock' into 'stately horses'. He will give them native rulers, and, their martial power restored, they will overthrow their enemies. Judah will be strengthened, and Ephraim, when it has turned to God in penitence, will be gathered in and multiplied, for Jehovah will rouse Himself as of old. All obstacles in the way of return will be overthrown, Egypt and Assyria humbled, and God's people shall turn to Him.

The Overthrow of the Rulers, ch. 11^{1-3}.

A fire devours the cedars of Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan, the shepherds howl and the lions roar; which seems to mean that the rulers, whether of the nations or of Israel, are to be overthrown.

The Rejection of the Good Shepherd and its Consequences, ch. 11^{4-17} 13^{7-9}.

The prophet is bidden to 'feed the flock of slaughter', which has been neglected by its own shepherds, and left to the mercy of traffickers. Taking two staves, 'Grace' and 'Union', he obeys, but the flock reject him, so that he has to leave them to their fate. He breaks the staff 'Grace' in token that Jehovah will no longer protect them. The sheep-merchants (?) see that he is acting for God. Then he demands his hire and is given thirty pieces of silver; these he casts into the treasury. He then breaks his staff 'Union' to prove that the union between Israel and Judah is at an end (11^{4-14}).

Personating a false shepherd, the prophet next shows the people what the result of their ingratitude will be (11^{15-17}). The shepherd will be smitten and the sheep scattered, while only a third will be rescued, and after trial restored to become the people of God (13^{7-9}).

The allegory suggests Israel at the mercy of foreign tyrants,

neglected by her own rulers and despising good counsel; perhaps some definite historical allusion is implied.

Part II. ch. 12–13⁶ 14. The Deliverance of Jerusalem and its Glorious Future, ch. 12–13⁶.

Jerusalem is described as besieged by the nations; even Judah joins in the attack on the city, but while the nations become panic-stricken, it sees its own error and turning on its old allies it rescues Jerusalem, which in turn becomes supernaturally strong for war (12¹⁻⁹).

When the deliverance is accomplished, every family by itself mourns the fate of a martyr, the representative of Jehovah, whom they have pierced (12¹⁰⁻¹⁴ and cf. possibly 13⁷⁻⁹). Then a fountain of cleansing is opened in Jerusalem (13¹), the idols are destroyed, the degraded prophets exterminated, and their profession discredited (13²⁻⁶).

The elevation of Jerusalem above the World, ch. 14.

Jerusalem is besieged and taken, and half the people destroyed; then Jehovah appears with His angel host, and cleaving the Mount of Olives, makes a path of escape for the fugitives. At last the Messianic future is realized, the temperature is equable, the light perpetual, perennial streams flow east and west, Jehovah is acknowledged by all. Jerusalem itself is uplifted, while the land around becomes a flat bottom. Her enemies are consumed by a hideous plague and panic seizes them; the survivors join themselves to God's people. All keep the feast of tabernacles under the threat of drought, and everything in Jerusalem becomes holy to the Lord; crowds of worshippers throng the Temple.

Summary.

The prophecy deals mainly with an ideal future: the Messianic King, victorious yet lowly, the bringer of peace; the rejected shepherd, whose rejection frustrates Jehovah's purposes; the pierced martyr, whose sufferings rouse shame in his countrymen when they have been delivered from their enemies; the Messianic Kingdom with its 'eventide of light' are the greatest gifts to prophecy contained in these chapters. It is strange that so suggestive a book should end with a picture of a 'Judaized world-empire with the Prince of Peace ruling in Jerusalem'[1].

[1] Marti, quoted by Driver, *Minor Prophets*, vol. ii (Century Bible), p. 235.

JONAH

[CHIEF SOURCE: *The Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, G. A. Smith.]

Authorship and Date.

The book makes no claim to be written by the historic Jonah, of whom mention is made in 2 Kings 14^{25}. An author probably living at a late date (note the language, and parallel passages elsewhere in the Old Testament), wishing to enforce on the Hebrew people the moral of their delinquent history, made use of Jonah's name, either because of some traditional connexion between him and Nineveh, or more probably because of his identification with the narrowest interests of the race.

Unity of the Book.

The unity of the book need not be questioned. The psalm in ch. 2 is drawn largely from the national liturgy (cf. 2^{2} with Ps. 18^{6}; 2^{3} with Ps. 42^{7}; 2^{4} with Ps. 31^{22}; 2^{8} with Ps. 31^{6}; 2^{9} with Ps. 50^{14}), but it may well have been placed by the author where it now stands.

The Allegorical Interpretation of the Book.

The book may be regarded as an allegory. Any attempt to treat it as history detracts from its dignity and moral force; the mention of the typical three days, the vagueness of the historical allusions, the inconsistencies, all conduce to the same opinion.

Story of Jonah. (1) His Mission and Flight.

Jonah is sent to threaten Nineveh. Urged rather by jealousy (4^{2}) than by sloth, cowardice, or wilfulness, he flees from the presence of GOD, and takes ship for far-off Tarshish. A tempest sent by Jehovah arises. The picture is vivid—the ship alive with fear, the heathen sailors panic-stricken and prayerful, the prophet asleep below. In the common extremity lots are cast, and Jonah stands revealed as the cause of the disaster. His conversion (his confession of his GOD and his acknowledgement of his sin) is followed by the conversion of the heathen sailors, who show a wonderful generosity in their reluctance to sacrifice the prophet; but when all efforts prove useless, Jonah at his own request is cast into the sea. Jehovah's purposes are not to be frustrated; having converted the heathen, Jonah sacrifices himself for them (1^{1-16}).

But a great sea-monster swallows Jonah, and from the belly of the fish he raises to Jehovah a prayer in which is recorded the experience of one who, having called on God in extremity, has learnt His power to save. Jonah is cast upon the shore (1^{17}–2^{10}). (2) The Great Fish.

Once more Jonah is sent to Nineveh, and he reluctantly obeys; and travelling through that vast monotonous town, with its dim masses of people and cattle, paralysing and terrifying in its immensity, he proclaims his warning message (the splendour and power of Nineveh are ignored). Jonah's mission is successful; the nation in its entirety, king, people, and even the beasts, repent and put on sackcloth, and God has mercy on them (3). (3) The repentance of Nineveh.

But Jonah 'is greatly angry': it is not care for his professional credit that moves him, but a jealousy of God's love extended to the heathen city. If Ninevite and Jew are to fare alike, were it not better to die? In tender raillery (for there is humour as well as gentleness in the query, 'Art thou greatly angry?') God rebukes Jonah, but he sits down displeased, and awaits the fate of Nineveh. Then God prepares a gourd to shelter him from the fierce rays of the sun. Left to nature he is soothed, but the gourd withers and his pity is aroused, and so through sympathy for the gourd he is taught something of God's pity for the heathen (4). (4) God's rebuke of Jonah's jealousy.

The object of the book is to force on the narrow, bigoted, reluctant mind of Israel the necessity of carrying God's message to the Gentiles, the possibility of their repentance, the universality of God's love. The meaning of the story is clear. Israel, with its knowledge of the grace of God (cf. Hosea) and its sense of the responsibility of the heathen (Amos 1 2^{1-3}), taught alike by prophet and history, is Jonah. Refusing its mission to be the religious teacher of the world, it is cast into exile, symbolized by the mythological monster of the deep (Jer. 51^{34-44} Isa. 27^{1}). In exile Israel cries to Jehovah (note the national force of the psalm in ch. 2), but when allowed to return it is more obstinate and narrow Explanation of the Allegory.

than ever. Deaf to the voice of its greatest teacher, Deutero-Isaiah, it hugs its own privileges, and grudges to the heathen the capacity for repentance innate in man; it sees only injustice in Jehovah's patience. The advantages of election are nullified, the sufferings of the chosen are made of no avail, if salvation be extended to the Gentile. What right has a God of love to show mercy on the heathen lying outside the covenant people? If Israel be no better than others, had it not better be extinct? Excuse is to be found for this temper in the ignorant idolatry, the terrific power and awful cruelty of the heathen world, which had impressed itself upon the Jew, but it has to be corrected, and so the 'Book of the Twelve' closes with the story of Jonah. 'God has vindicated His love to the jealousy of those who thought He was theirs alone, and we are left with a grand vague vision of an immeasurable city, with its multitude of innocent children and cattle, and God's compassion brooding over all.'[1]

[1] G. A. Smith, *Book of the Twelve*, vol. ii, p. 541.

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Sketchmap of the HOME of HEBREW PROPHECY

Lines of Construction ——— Each unit of measurement = 350 miles